

THE
Wisdom of God
IN THE
Redemption of Man,
AS
Deliver'd in Holy Scripture,
Vindicated from the Chief Objections
of our Modern Infidels.

In Eight SERMONS, Preach'd at
the Cathedral Church of St. Paul,
in the Year 1708. at the Lecture
Founded by the Honourable Robert
Boyle, Esquire.

In which the true Nature and Necessity of
Atonement and Satisfaction for Sins are at
large Explain'd and Prov'd both from
Scripture and Reason.

By- JOHN TURNER, D. D.
Vicar of Greenwich. *J. Y*

2 COR. V. 18, 19.

*And all things are of God who has reconciled us unto him-
self by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the Ministry of
Reconciliation.*

*To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the World unto
himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them, and has
committed to us the word of Reconciliation.*

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the Rose in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1709.



T O T H E

Most Reverend Father in God,

T H O M A S,

Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*;
and Primate of all *England*:

A N D T O

Sir HENRY ASHURST,
Baronet:

The Surviving Trustees appointed
by the Honourable **ROBERT**
BOYLE, Esquire,

This Discourse is humbly De-
dicated.

A 2 T H E

God, Father in God,

THOMAS

Lord Archbishop of Canterbury
and Primate of All England

AND TO

SIR HENRY ARMYN

Chancellor

the University of Cambridge
by the Honorable AGNES
GOTTE, Clerk

This Discharge is humbly De-
clared.

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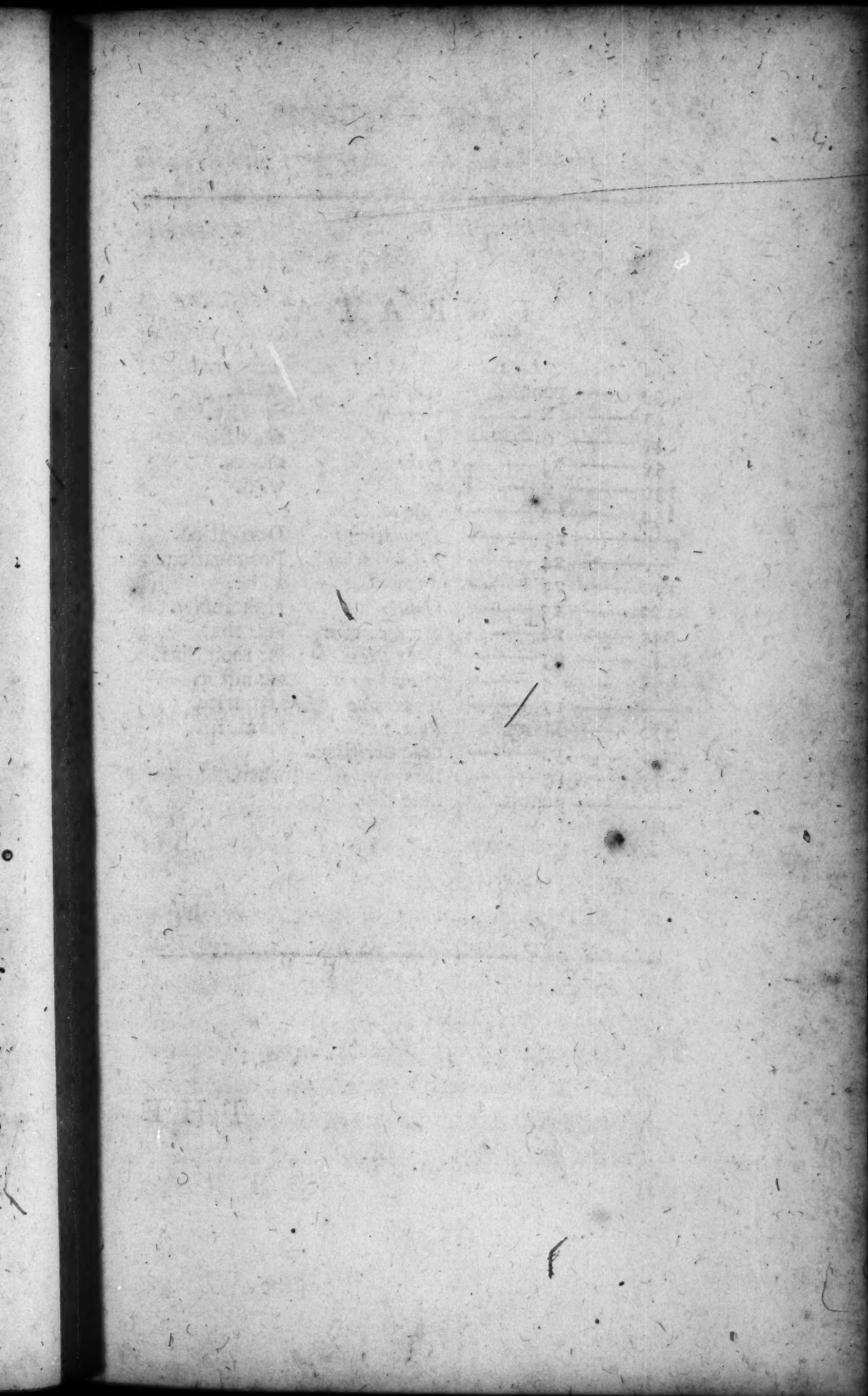
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THE

THE
Wisdom of God,
IN THE
Redemption of Man, &c.

The Introduction,

THE Foundation of our Religion, as it's purely Christian, is this; That the Sins and Transgressions of Men are not otherwise forgiven, nor their Souls otherwise to be saved, than by the Mediation of Christ Jesus, and by that Expiatory Atonement which he has made with God for our Reconciliation. A Doctrine, which as it's the great Fundamental Point, and most Important of all the Truths reveal'd

The Wisdom of God,

in the Gospel, by so much has it been the most vigorously oppos'd, and run down by the Modern Enemies of Christianity; as Unreasonable, and Foolish, and altogether unworthy of God. For into that extreme Degeneracy from all sound Piety, and true Goodness are we in this Unhappy Age, and Nation fallen, that Sinners, not content as heretofore, to neglect Religion, and to indulge themselves in the licentious Practice of almost all that it forbids; are now grown Bolder, and with unusual Confidence learn to despise what at first they only neglected. And not only to violate the Laws of Christianity, but even to decry its Principles, and to dispute its Authority, and condemn it as Imposture. To which end they publish to the World, as openly as they dare, such Principles as run directly counter to the whole Design of it. *That God is not to be worshiped by a Mediator, nor Pardon of Sins, and Reconciliation to be expected by a Sacrifice of Expiation and Atonement. That these Things are disagreeable to the Mercy of God, and to the Freedom of his Grace; both which are Essential to him, as well as Justice* and

in the Redemption of Man.

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and Vengeance. Or at most they tell us, that *Repentance is of itself a sufficient Expiation*; and to pretend that we can have no just Hope of Pardon, and Forgiveness of Sins, and of the Salvation of our Souls, but by the Redemption and Mediation of Christ Jesus, is, say they, *as Derogatory to the Love, and Compassion, and Clemency of the Divine Nature, as the Worship of him by an Image is to his Spirituality.*

These are strange Doctrins, and 'tis a frightful and amazing Thing to hear the Fundamentals of Christianity thus openly struck at, and assaulted. And the Consequences of these Notions are not to be thought on without Trembling and Horror. And yet they are too readily cherish'd and promoted, and too vigorously defended by Men of Leud, and Vicious practices; and such who know no better way to vindicate their scandalous Impieties, and to sooth and silence the bitter Outcries of a guilty and a wounded Conscience, than by running down every way the Authority of that Gospel which was intended to reclaim them. The Excellency and Divine Authority of our Christian Revelation have been well accounted for

B 2

by

The Wisdom of God,

by several in this place, against all Objections both of *Jews* and other Infidels. But what is to be hop'd for from any such Performances, however *Accurate* and *Compleat*, while Men espouse such extravagant Notions and Opinions, as they think a sufficient Bar to all the Proofs we bring in the Defence of our Religion? And so instead of examining fairly the Evidences of its Truth, they reject it with Scorn, and Derision, and great Disdain.

It may not therefore be Improper, to try the Force of even these Pretences, and to let the World see, on what false and mistaken Ground these unreasonable and mischievous Errors are founded. And this is what I shall now, by God's Leave, attempt; and in an impartial Inquiry into these Things, I hope to make it appear, that the Principles of these Men are as Unsound as their Manners generally Corrupt; their Notions mistaken, their Objections of no just Force; and that the Doctrin of Man's Redemption and Remission of Sins, by the Expiatory Sacrifice of the Blood of Christ, as deliver'd in the New Testament, is neither *Unnecessary*, nor *Unreasonable*,
nor

in the Redemption of Man.

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nor at all disagreeable to the Divine Perfections of God; but much for his Glory, and in which the brightest of his Divine Attributes are admirably and conspicuously display'd.

If this be made good, it will not only serve as a Reply to the plausible Pretences of Antichristian Men, but will give us also such a Prospect of the Reasonableness and Excellency of Christianity, and of the Wisdom and Goodness of God in our Redemption, as must needs confirm our Faith, win upon our Affections, conciliate our Love, call for our Thanks and Praise, and so convince us of the Danger of Sin, and of the Necessity of Holiness in all our Conversation, as must have great Force to oblige and incite all Christians to live as becomes this Gospel. “Thou
“therefore, O Blessed God, and Holy
“Jesus, who didst graciously conde-
“scend to shed thy Blood and Die
“for Sinners, for thy Revilers and
“Persecutors, that all thro’ thee might
“be saved: Do thou still vouchsafe to
“make *thy ways known to Men, and thy*
“*saving health to all Nations.* And so
“guide, I beseech thee, my Thoughts
“and Meditations in delivering the
B 3 sacred

“ sacred Truths of thy Gospel, that it
 “ may be all for the Honour of thy
 “ Name, the Good of thy Church,
 “ the Conviction of all Gainfayers,
 “ and to the Glory of thy Heavenly
 “ Father; to whom with Thee, O
 “ Blessed Jesus, and the Holy Spirit,
 “ be Glory and Praise for ever, *A-*
 “ *men.*

But because the clearing of this
 Point, which I have undertaken to
 defend, will necessarily require a pret-
 ty long Thread of Argument, that
 will take up some considerable Time,
 it will not, I hope, be a Fault to en-
 deavour beforehand to break a little
 the Force of these corrupt Insinuat-
 ions, and to prevent the Impressions
 they may beapt to make on some Mens
 Minds, by one or two previous Re-
 marks. As,

immorality
the chief
Cause of
Infidelity.

1. By observing the general Dissol-
 luteness of those Mens Manners, who
 Teach and maintain such bold and
 Antichristian Principles. For whate-
 ver is pretended, it is an Exemption
 from that Strictness, and Purity, and
 Holiness of Life, which this Gospel
 teaches, that is the chief End of all
 their Quarrels and Exceptions against
 it.

in the Redemption of Man.

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it. And had it not struck so directly at the Root of their Uncleanneſs, Senſuality and impious Debaucheries, it might have hop'd for better Quarter, both from their Tongues and Pens.

And tho' ſome of the Patriots of theſe Antichriſtian Doctrins pretend greater Zeal for God and his Glory, and would ſeem only to boaſt in the Sufficiency of the Light of Reaſon to make Men good and fit for God; yet it's certain, that they have publickly Diſown'd and Oppos'd ſome of thoſe Moral Duties, and Holy Rules of Life which the Goſpel teaches, as well as the Myſterious Doctrin of our Redemption. *Inceſtuous Marriages*, and *Self-Murther*, and *doing Evil that Good may come of it*, have been ſtudiouſly fended by them. And their Practices have been agreeable to their Principles.

But if I ſhould enlarge here, it would lead me to ſome very Ungrateful Remembrances. And yet ſuch as might be excuſable, in that they undeniably demonſtrate, that whatever is pretended, theſe Diſputants are not wiſer than their Brethren; nor ſuch

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as see farther into the Truth and Reasons of Things, but raise these Profane Cavils against Christianity rather from their Hatred and violent Disaffection to it, than from any singular Improvements of Judgment and Reason. But,

*Reason
must submit
to Divine Reve-
lation.*

2. Be their Morals what they will, it's strange, and highly unreasonable, that Men should dispute the Councils and Declarations of God in a well attested Revelation. And while there stands upon a lasting Record certain and sure Evidence of the Divinity of the Gospel, that they will not admit God to be a better Judge than Men, what is Wise, and what is Reasonable, and what is Necessary for the Honour of his Government. If there was any thing considerable to be pleaded against the Sufficiency of that Proof which we have of the Truth and Divine Authority of Christianity, this, I confess, were the most proper place to attack it in. Or if there was any thing trifling or mean in its Evidence, it might not then be altogether improper to allege the Unnecessariness of a Doctrin that had but little ground of Certainty. But after the most Con-
vincing

vincing and Incontestable Evidence that the Nature and Circumstances of Things will admit, and several such clear and rational Vindications of the Sufficiency of that Proof as, I think, its impossible to give a fair and rational Answer to: In the Face of all this good Testimony of the certain Declaration of God's Will, for any Men to take upon them to be the only Judges what is agreeable to it, and stiffly to maintain, that this is Unnecessary, and that Absurd or Impossible, even when it is expressly declar'd in a well attested Revelation, is, I think, Impious and Bold, and *leaning to their own Understanding*, beyond all the Duty and Distance of Creatures and Sinners. For if ever any Revelation in the World could reasonably pretend to over-rule the Judgments of Men, and make it fit for us to submit our own Thoughts and Notions, the Gospel of Jesus Christ may justly claim this Authority over us, in that no other was ever yet attested like it.

I confess, it's justly made one Character of every Divine Revelation, that it be worthy of God, and agreeable to all his known Perfections; and what-

whatever is contrary to this Rule is a real Objection. But then it must not be every thing which partial Men may set up as such, that must be admitted; but only what is so evidently repugnant to his confess'd Attributes, as to be an undeniable Blemish to him, and directly to contradict those Natural and Indelible Notions by which he has made himself known to the World. As for Example; if it should either directly, or in the natural Consequences of it, charge God with Injustice, or Folly, or Sin: This, I own, would be a good Objection, in that we cannot but believe him to be perfectly Righteous, and Wise, and Pure. Such Imputations, if true, I acknowledge would have great Force, because they are contrary to certain and undoubted Truths, evidently known antecedently to all Divine Revelation. But I hope there is no such Repugnancy to the glorious Attributes of God, in the Redemption of Mankind by Jesus Christ. So far from it, that I hope it will be found in the Sequel of this Discourse, that this whole Evangelical Dispensation is more for his Glory, and more for the Honour of his Divine

vine

vine Perfections, and his wise Government, than any other whatsoever.

Now to make all this clear and plain, it will be necessary for me to consider,

I. What was the Primitive State, and Original Condition of Mankind before our Fall.

II. What is the true Condition of our Fallen, Lapsed State, from whence the want of a Saviour, and the Necessity of Redemption rises. And then,

III. *Lastly.* To shew how much better, and more advantageously the Wisdom, and Goodness, and Justice, and Holiness of God are display'd in this method of Reconciliation and Salvation for Sinners, which the Christian Gospel exhibits, than in any other way or method that Mankind can pretend to the Knowledge of.

I. What was the Primitive State, and Original Condition of Man before his Fall. And this I cannot but think very necessary to be first spoken to, being

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ing persuaded that God's dealing with Mankind upon our Fall, has been with so particular a Respect to the State and Circumstances from which we fell; and that there is so close a Relation between the first Covenant of Works made in *Adam*, and this of Grace and Mercy in Jesus Christ, as to the Reasons and Principles on which they are founded; that the one cannot be sufficiently accounted for, without a right Understanding of, and a particular Regard to the Obligations of the other.

God's Original Covenant with Mankind.

The true Account then of our Primitive, Original State antecedently to our Fall, I take to have been this: That as we were then put into a State of Perfection, both as to Innocency and Happiness, both as to Righteousness and Immortality; so it was the Original Decree and Covenant of Almighty God with us, to make our Felicity and Immortality the Reward of our Righteousness, and to establish us in the one upon condition of our Perseverance in the other, and not otherwise. In consequence of which Original Covenant and Law, so close a Relation, and so inseparable a Connexion is made between

between the Holiness and Happiness of Mankind, that the one could be preserv'd no longer than the other. That so long as we were entirely Innocent, we might be completely Happy and Immortal. But upon our first Transgression we were to lose our Happiness, to become Miserable and Mortal, and to continue so as long as we continu'd in a state of Sin. Never to be intitled to perfect Felicity and Immortality again, till we could in some reasonable and agreeable way of Righteousness and Justice be restor'd to that Original State of Holiness from which we fell.

Now as it is from this Principle that I hope to vindicate the Necessity of our Redemption by Jesus Christ, and as a great deal of the Force and Truth of our Reasoning on this Subject will depend upon the Truth and Certainty of this Account of our first Original State, I shall accordingly set myself to make the Truth and Certainty of that appear. And this,

1. First from the Authority of Holy Scripture. And then,

2. By

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2. By accounting for the Reasonableness of such a Covenant, and the Necessity of such a Dispensation.

1. I am to prove from the Evidence and Authority of Holy Scripture, that God did originally Decree and Ordain to establish Mankind, in Perfect, Everlasting Felicity and Immortality, as a Reward of, and upon the condition of an Everlasting Perseverance in his Original Innocency and Righteousness, and not otherwise. And this I shall prove,

1. From the Original Covenant and Law which God made with all Mankind in *Adam*, concerning the forbidden Fruit. *Gen. 2. 17. Of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil thou shalt not Eat, For in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely Die.* In which Sentence, taken together with its Context, there are two Things evidently and certainly imply'd.

1. That so long as Man by keeping God's Commands preserv'd his Innocence, and continu'd in that state of Righteousness and Holiness in which God created and plac'd him; so long he should certainly be Immortal, and
at

at the least, have the Blessings that he then enjoy'd, continu'd to him.

2. That upon his first Offence or Disobedience he was to lose that Happiness, and to become obnoxious both to Misery and Death. And these two Things together do, I think, sufficiently discover what I now maintain, (*viz.*) That God did originally design and decree, that Immortal Bliss should be the Reward of a Perfection of Holiness in Man; and not otherwise to be hop'd for.

I don't take upon me to determine any thing concerning the Place of his Happiness, if he had not sinned; whether it was to have been here on Earth, or whether he was to have been at last translated into Heaven above. For tho' God might have been thus Bountiful, and Generous in his Acts of Grace, if he so thought fit, and might have translated him from the Joys of an Earthly Paradise to those of Heaven; yet as the Scripture tells us, that Fallen Man gains Heaven only by Jesus Christ, and is silent where his Immortal State should have been, had he persever'd in Innocence; we must leave that undetermin'd. All that concerns

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us to know, is, that we had been Happy, and that we had been Immortal in that Happiness, if we had not sinned; and that we lost it by Disobedience: And this, I think, that Text evidently enough declares.

There are, I confess, two Things objected against these two Conclusions.

*Episcop.
Inst. Lib.
i. cap. x.*

First, One by a Learned Man, who says, that the Scripture, which denounceth Death to *Adam's* Sin, makes no mention of any Promise of Immortality to Obedience. But I am a little surpriz'd to find so great a Man to fall so short in so plain a Matter. In that the very Denunciation of Death to Man's Transgression, implies a Promise of Immortality, if he sinned not. For as in the general Promises of God, there is always a Condition intended, tho' not mention'd, and always understood, tho' not express'd; without which Condition the Promises are not binding, or of force: So also in his Threats and Denunciations of Calamities and Curses, it is always to be suppos'd, that by avoiding the Iniquities to which the Vengeance is denounc'd, the Evils threatned may be escap'd.

Thus

Thus when God sent his Prophet to declare, *Yet forty Days and Niniveh shall be overthrown*; the Event shews, that by removing the Transgressions, which call for Judgments, the Calamities also may be prevented.

To be short, in the very Nature of the Thing, a Law made with a Punishment annex'd to the Transgression of it, is an implicit Covenant; that none but those only who disobey it, shall suffer what that denounces. Without this, Laws and Covenants would be no Guides, no Comforts to the Obedient. For where is the Blessing and Consolation of such in keeping the Law, if after all, they that keep, and they that break it, shall fall alike into that Calamity, which is made the Punishment of it? What would a Son think of that Father, who, to deter him from any particular Offence, should threaten, that upon his Disobedience he would certainly disinherit him? Would he not from that Declaration alone conclude, that by a faithful Compliance to his Father's Will, he should certainly prevent that Calamity, and secure his Portion? Or if a Master should be often inculcating to

Jonah
iii. 14.

An implicit Promise of Immortality contain'd in the threatening of Death.

to his Slave, that if he were Idle and False he would never make him Free: Would he not, if the Master had any Character for Goodness and Integrity, would he not, I say, from such Intimations reasonably expect, that by Diligence and Fidelity he might obtain his Liberty at last? This, in the common Sincerity of one Man to another, must necessarily be suppos'd. Much more then with a Gracious and Merciful God, a God of Love and absolute Sincerity, and with whom there is no Deceit, no Collusion: A plain Threatning of the greatest Natural Evil, must in all Reason suppose a firm Resolution and Covenant, that by Obedience Men should escape that Evil, and by a Constancy in perfect Holiness should be Immortal in their Happiness.

2. The *Second* Objection is partly brought to confirm the former, and is this; That as Man had originally no express Promise of Immortality, so he had no Natural Right, or Claim to it; but was Mortal by Nature, and *might*, and must have Died, altho' he had never sinned. I submit to the Truth of this Objection, so far as concerns Man's having no Natural Right to an Immortal

mortal State. For whatever may be pleaded as to the Appearance of Right, which a Rational Creature, capable of Good and Evil, and in one Part by Nature Immortal, may seem to derive from God, of perpetuating his Being and Happiness by doing good above what other Irrational Creatures, that have no such Excellencies, and that were originally made only for Servitude and Subserviency to Man, can pretend to: And however, in debating this Point, it may seem not a little hard, to inflict one of the greatest Evils, and the express Punishment of Sin, on a Virtuous and perfectly Innocent Creature, yet, looking on these Things rather as the Tokens of God's Will and kind Purpose towards Man, than as Evidences of an Original Natural Right, I wave all this, and return to my former Argument, *viz.* That if Man had no Natural Right to Immortality, yet God in threatening Death as the Punishment of Sin, must in that very Denunciation be suppos'd implicitly to Covenant and Promise, that by not Sinning he should live for ever, and have his Felicities Eternal. This necessarily arises from the Nature of

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all Laws, that have Rewards and Punishments annext. The Reason and Purpose of all such Laws import an Exemption from the Calamity threaten'd, if the Transgression be not committed.

We must then from the fore-mention'd Words necessarily conclude, that Death is so truly and properly the Wages or Punishment of Sin, that if Man had never Sinned he had never Died, never been Miserable; but that Immortality and Happiness were by that Law declar'd to be the Reward and Recompence of his Holiness. But,

*Sin the
true Cause
of Man's
Mortality.*

2. The Truth of this is confirm'd from the Scripture History of the Execution of that Law. The same Scripture which tells us that God instituted such a Law, and made such a Covenant, and which gives us an account that Man was never to have Died, but to have been absolutely Immortal, if he had never Sinned, tells us also, that upon his first Transgression, and Violation of it, he lost his Title to Immortality, and became obnoxious both to Misery and Death. This the Words plainly and confessedly import,
In the Day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt

shalt surely Die, i. e. Thou shallest under the Sentence of Death, thou on that very Day becomeest Mortal, and subject to Misery; and at the last, when God thinks fit to take the Advantage of this Forfeiture, shalt as surely Die, as thou art now Alive. And the Event abundantly confirms this Interpretation. For no sooner had *Adam* transgress'd the Law of God, and fallen into Sin, but Misery and Trouble immediately came upon him. No sooner did he disobey the Divine Command, and lose his Perfection of Innocence and Righteousness, but he felt the wretched Effects of his Disobedience in his Mortality. For tho' he did not instantly and immediately Die, yet he instantly became Mortal, and had the Forecasts of Death in Shame, and Sorrow, and in becoming subject to all the Evils of a Mortal Condition: To Labour, and Trouble, and great Vexations, that are the certain Forerunners of a Dissolution, and gave him sufficient Reason to believe the Truth of what had been declar'd, and the Certainty of what he was to expect.

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And now what is the plain Construction and Language of all this together, but only to make good what I am insisting on? That God's Original Purpose and Design was, to establish Mankind in a Perfection of Immortal Bliss only by a Perfection of Righteousness and Holiness, and no otherwise? For to decree that Man should never Die, if he had never Sinned, but that as soon as he transgress'd God's Law, he should immediately lose his Happiness, and become obnoxious both to Misery and Death: This is, I think, effectually to establish by a Covenant and a Law, that nothing less than a Perfection in Holiness should secure Man a Perfection of Felicity and Immortality; and by a Decree to make the one inseparable from the other.

But because the Men that we have now to do with Ridicule the Books of *Moses*, and have not a just regard to the Authority of any Divine Revelation, I propos'd,

2. To give some account of the Righteousness of such a Covenant, and of the Credibility of such a Relation, from the evident Principles of Reason, and

and the excellent Ends and Purposes to which it plainly serves. To which end let it be consider'd,

1. That Good and Evil are not Things in their Nature indifferent and mutable, but have an Essential, Everlasting and Unchangeable Foundation of Distinction between them. *Good and Evil are essentially different.* This is so apparent, that no Body can with any tolerable Modesty deny it. To assert the contrary, is in the Consequence of it to say, that it's all one in Nature, to Worship God, and to Blaspheme him; to Love your Neighbour, and to Murther him, to Defile, and to keep your self Pure. And if any Man be so near approach'd to Madness as to affirm this; there needs no other Confutation than to appeal to the common Sentiments and Reason of Mankind against him. And if there be an Essential and Eternal Difference between Good and Evil, from hence it sufficiently appears,

2. That it was not an Arbitrary and indifferent thing with God, whether he would by his Laws and Commands enjoin the one, and forbid the other; but that he was really determin'd in it by the eternal Nature and unchangeable *That Difference the Foundation of God's Laws.*

The Wisdom of God,

able Reason of Things. A Holy God cannot but command what is Good, and forbid what is Evil. I deny not but that God may sometimes make Trial of the Obedience of his Children in things of an indifferent Nature. But as our present Enquiry is not about the unchangeable Nature of any one single Precept alone, but about the Principles of the Divine Legislature in general; so I may truly say, that a Holy God cannot but command what is Good, and forbid what is Evil. And consequently that his Original Covenant with Mankind, as to the general Intention of it, had its Foundation in the unchangeable Nature and eternal Reason of things.

It would, I confess, be very much to our present Purpose, to ~~show~~ you here, that there is in Nature such a close and unalienable Relation between Holiness and Happiness, that the one really constitutes the other. And that Sin in the natural Influence of the thing, as well as in the Laws and Decrees of God, is destructive of our Happiness and Bliss. But because this is a difficult, tho' I verily believe a certain Truth, I shall content myself only to observe, That the Absolute and Essential

tial Holiness of God, which is to him, if I may so speak, a Rule and a Law in all his Dispensations, was the great Reason and Foundation of all his Laws and Injunctions against Sin. Such a Reason and Principle as did not leave it indifferent to him, whether he would forbid it or no. But such a one as may not improperly be call'd an Obligation to do all that Laws, and Precepts, and Commands, and Threatenings, and the severest Denunciations could do to prevent it. This, I think, is no more than what it was indeed necessary for a Righteous and a Holy God to do. The Holiness of God consists in, or at least necessarily includes, a Natural and Essential Love of Virtue, and a Natural and Essential Hatred, and utter Abhorrence and Detestation of Iniquity.

A Holy God cannot but Love the one, and Hate the other; cannot but be solicitous to Promote the one, and to Prevent the other. And therefore I do not see how a Being so perfectly and essentially Pure, could sufficiently attest his absolute Abhorrence of all Sin, and especially in the Government of Free Agents, without the strictest
Laws

Laws against it; and those back'd with the severest Threatnings. The Want of either of which would have look'd too like Indifference, either in the Things themselves, or at least in the Will, and Opinion, and Esteem of him that governs us. And as these Considerations shew how necessary it was that God should command Virtue and Goodness, and universally forbid all Vice and Sin, we may add,

*A perfect
Obedience
originally
requir'd,
and why.
Gen. i. 26.*

3. That the advantageous Condition and Circumstance of Mankind in our Original State, vindicated God in requiring an Obedience to the utmost Degree of absolute Perfection. *God made Man after his own Image* by a larger Communication of Wisdom, and Knowledge, and Spiritual Power, than what any Man now on Earth enjoys. This, as it is related in Scripture, so it must necessarily be granted, or we make God, and not *Adam*, the chief Author of Man's Apostacy. For if Man had been made, and sent into the World from his Divine Hand with invincible Infirmities, and a natural Incapacity of avoiding all the Evil that was forbid, and doing all the Good that was commanded, as now we

we are; this would reflect and throw all the Guilt of his Transgressions on the Author of his Being.

As therefore it must necessarily be confess'd, that God originally made Man Perfect in his Faculties, and endu'd him with a sufficiency of Strength and Capacity to preserve that Innocence entire in which he was created; so those Capacities and Powers speak out plainly what God intended by them. He that does nothing in vain, but orders all Things to useful Ends and wise Designs, had certainly never given Man such mighty Gifts, and put him into a Condition of living without Sin, but that he intended and requir'd that he should faithfully employ those complete Endowments to so noble and worthy an End, and preserve by them that Perfection of Righteousness in which he was originally created. In a State of Repentance and imperfect Holiness, Powers and Capacities less complete had been sufficient. And we that are now under such a State, have therefore only such weak and incomplete Abilities communicated. But in a nobler Condition, and more Divine and Perfect, God
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The Wisdom of God,

certainly 'design'd that Man's Obedience should be as exact as his Capacity, and his Conversation as totally free from all Transgression and Offence, as his State was from all Blemish and Infirmary. And if all these Things together made it reasonable, and in any sense necessary, that God should forbid all manner of Sin absolutely, and that too under the severest Penalties and Punishment upon Disobedience, it cannot, I think, be deny'd, but that,

4. *Lastly*, The Execution of such a Law by inflicting the Punishment denounc'd was as necessary as the Enacting it. Necessary to give Authority to his Divine Sanctions against Sin. And that in these two Respects.

The Punishment of Sin the proper Vindication of God's Holiness.

1. With respect to God, in the Influence it has to possess Mankind with a deep and serious sense of his Perfect Holiness, as the Foundation and Principle from whence all his Laws and Injunctions against Iniquity proceed. It is evidently of the greatest Moment imaginable to Mankind, in order to the Prevention of Sin, to have right Notions, and worthy Apprehensions of the perfect Purity and Holiness of that
God

God who has forbid it, and of the Justice and Greatness of his Displeasure upon the Commission of it. And that because it is the universal Purpose and Aim of all Religion in the World, to make Men like God, and Conformable as much as may be to his Nature and his Will: So that they can never have their Notions and Principles of the Deity very much corrupted, but it's always found to have a very mischievous Influence upon their Actions. This was one great Evil that attended those infamous Fables, and scandalous Traditions of the *Gentile* Gods. They not only gave countenance to the Evils that Men committed, but while they found themselves Conformable to their Deities therein, they lost all their Shame and their Remorse for those Sins, and so were harden'd against all Thoughts of Repentance.

And in Truth, to Conform our selves to the God we Worship, is so just a Principle in all true Religion, that the Gospel itself commands us to imitate Him in all his imitable Perfections. And the having our Notions and Apprehensions of Him right, as the Christian Revelation helps to make them

The Wisdom of God,

them so, is one of the great Advantages of this Religion, and one of those useful Means whereby our Virtues may be carry'd up to the greatest Perfection, and most noble Height. In a word, there is not any thing more useful and necessary in Religion, than for all Mankind to have a lively, just and serious Sense of the perfect Righteousness and Holiness of God.

And yet I do not see how such a serious and lively Sense of that perfect Holiness of God could be possibly kept up without some such a Covenant or Law. In that all Mankind universally have their Notions and Apprehensions of the Deity, agreeable to the Laws, and Precepts, and Commands that they at any time receive from him; and to the Discoveries that he makes of his Approbation, or Displeasure in the Rewards and Punishments that are annex'd to them. And therefore,

The Punishment of Adam's Sin instructive to all Mankind.

2. Such an Institution was of great use in the very Discoveries that are therein made, how much Man's Happiness depended on his Innocency, and of the miserable Fruits, and severe Calamities, that must follow his Transgressions

gressions and Disobedience. Whereby he might become sensible, that there is no dallying or trifling in a matter of so very great Importance; in that the Continuance, or the Forfeiture of his Life and his Felicity depended wholly on his faithful Care, and constant Perseverance in his Duty. And this is it that reasonably accounts for all the seeming Severity and Strictness of this first Institution. Nothing less could seem sufficient to convince Mankind, that God was very serious, and in earnest, in his Declarations against Sin; and thereby to make them also serious in their Care to avoid it. What indeed could tend more naturally to restrain Men from the Evils that God had forbid, and to engage them to persevere in that Holiness which He was solicitous to preserve, than to be assur'd by an express Declaration from himself, that we must lose our Happiness with our Innocence? Men, as I said above, usually form their Apprehensions of Things according to the visible Effects which they discover from them. What they can commit with Safety and Impunity, they will always believe Innocent, and be ready

to

to gratifie their Inclinations in. But what they find provokes God's Vengeance to an extraordinary Severity of Judgments and Calamities, that they will believe in reality Displeasing, and may possibly be prevail'd on to eschew. And therefore the extraordinary Rigour of such a Covenant, however it may seem severe, was yet very agreeable to the absolute Holiness of God, and in some sense necessary, considering his hearty Desires, and earnest Sollicitude, to prevent Man's falling into Sin; which any Establishment more gentle and mild, and less severe, would have had so much the less Influence to prevent.

I have gon thus far to make good my first Observation, both from Scripture and Reason, *viz.* That God's first Original Purpose with Mankind was, to establish us in Complete, Everlasting and Immortal Happiness, only upon an absolute Perfection of Obedience and Holiness, without any manner of Failure or Defect. And there is, I am verily perswaded, so much just Weight and Force in what has been said to this Purpose, that if we were now to be put again into the same Condition and Circumstances, the same Laws and the same

same Covenant would reasonably be expected, and in some measure would be necessary to these Ends.

It would be reasonable, and it would be necessary, in regard to God's Holiness, to his Hatred of Sin, and his Desire to prevent it, that He should forbid it, and that universally too; and look for, and insist on an Obedience as Exact and Complete, as Man's Faculties were Noble, and his Abilities Perfect. Nothing less than such an universal and strict Prohibition could be suitable to the Essential Perfections of the Almighty. It would be reasonable also, that he should Establish and Confirm the Authority of his Commands, by a Denunciation of some such severe Punishment, as upon the Disobedience of Mankind he resolv'd to inflict. And it would be reasonable, that Man's natural Comforts and Enjoyments should be made always so to depend on his moral Practice and Behaviour, that he may in some measure discover the Detestableness of Sin before God in the bitter Fruits of it. And tho' the Rules of Discipline in a degenerate state of Trial do not make it necessary that his personal

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The Wisdom of God,

Felicity should always rise and fall in exact measure to his Virtues and his Vices, yet the Principles of Natural Justice seem necessarily to provide, that what is eternally decreed to be the Punishment of Sin, should never be totally remov'd till all our Guilt also be done away. And consequently what was eternally determin'd to be the everlasting Reward of Holiness and Virtue, should never be absolutely Complete, until our Holiness and our Virtue were so too. And thus, if Mankind were to act the same Scene over again, the same Practice and Behaviour would reasonably and righteously make our Condition just what we now find it to be. Nothing less than an Absolute Perfection of Righteousness and Holiness could make our Felicity Everlasting and Complete, Sin would bring Misery and Sorrow along with it. And the Creatures who had no other Title to an Happy and Immortal Life, but by a Covenant with God of perfect and unfinning Obedience, would find that the first Sin would make them both Miserable and Mortal.

And

And the Conclusion to be drawn from all this Subservient to our main Design is, That by an Original Law, as Early and as Ancient as the Creation of Man, by an unchangeable Institution and Decree, founded on the Purity and Holiness of God, and on the eternal Difference between Good and Evil, a state of Sin, and a state of Happiness are absolutely incompatible. A Sinner, while such, must be miserable, must be obnoxious to Misery and Death; and can never be Immortal, and eternally Happy, until he can be restor'd to a State of perfect Righteousness and Holiness.—And this brings us to the,

*A State of
Sin and
Happiness
incom-
patible.*

II. Second Thing to be consider'd, *Serm. II.*
The Condition of Mankind in our Lapsed, Faln State. What the Miseries and Calamities of it are, whereby we want a Redeemer to make our Peace, and a Saviour to deliver us.

And here I have in some measure prevented myself, in that I have shew'd you already,

1. That as the Perfection of our Felicity and our Immortality depended absolutely and indispensably on our

*Sin always
productive
of Misery.*

perfect Innocence and Righteousness, so with Sin necessarily enter'd Misery and Death. And a State of Sin must always be attended with Misery and Afflictions. Bliss and Immortality being constituted the Rewards of absolute and spotless Innocency, the first Transgression of our first Parents in consequence of that made the whole Race and Posterity of *Adam* to become both Miserable and Mortal. Thus *St. Paul* accounts for the Misery and Mortality of our Faln State, *Rom. 5. 12. By one Man Sin enter'd into the World, and Death by Sin, and so Death passed upon all Men.* The Words have a plain and certain Respect to that Original Covenant or Law upon which we now found our Argument. And God has sufficiently vindicated the Authority of that Law, by a strict Execution of the Sentence denounc'd by it against Man's first Transgression and Disobedience. And by the uninterrupted Continuance of Misery and Death among us ever since we first fell from that state of Innocency.

I know very well, that some, to avoid the Conclusions which necessarily follow from these Principles, would
sug-

suggest, that it's scarce Righteous in God thus to punish the whole Race of Mankind for the Sin of one single Man. And there had been some Precedence for such a Plea, if we had had, not a Covenant, but a Natural Right to Immortality. And Death might have been look'd on, as a meer Debt of Nature, originally appointed by the supreme Dominion of his Great Creator without any regard to Man's Disobedience, had it not been expressly threaten'd as the Punishment of Sin. But when Mankind appears to have no rightful Claim to Immortality otherwise than as in a state of perfect Innocency, it does not at all impeach the Righteousness of God to withdraw those Favours in a state of Sin, which were promis'd and intended only to recompence a state of Righteousness.

2. As we thus become Miserable and Mortal, so we are like to continue in Misery, and under the Powers of Death, as long as we continue in a state of Sin. And so as that we can never be restor'd to a Perfection of Immortal and Everlasting Felicity, until we can be restor'd to such a Perfection of Obedience and Righteousness,

ness, as that from which we fell. The Truth of this Observation is sufficiently confirm'd from the Reasons of the former. For if God did indeed by an Original Covenant and Law Ordain and Decree that Immortality should be the Reward of nothing less than a Perfection of Holiness, such a Law demonstrates, that a state of Sin, and a state of Immortality, are incompatible. And the Incompatibility of a state of Sin with a state of Bliss and Immortality, as plainly demonstrates, that there is no Possibility of recovering our lost Felicity, till we can be restor'd to our Original Righteousness. And this is a Consideration that ought to be very carefully remember'd, especially since we must add,

*All Hope
of Mercy
must be on
Conditions
agreeable
to God's
first Decree.*

3. *Lastly.* That as the Necessity of all this proceeded from the indispensable Obligations of that first Law, and the eternal Reasons on which it was founded; so the Restitution of Mankind to our Original State was not reasonably to be expected, in that it could not so righteously be accomplish'd, but in such a Way, and on such Conditions, as are consistent with the Ends, and Reasons, and Principles

of that first Covenant, *viz.* The Honour of God's Attributes, the Wisdom of his Government, and the inviolable Authority of his sacred Laws and Constitutions. As these were the first Principles of, and very strictly regarded in God's first Ordinance and Covenant with Mankind, so are they strictly to be consulted in the manner of our Restitution, and in the Conditions of our Pardon and Salvation. If the Obligations and Authority of that first Covenant had been such as might reasonably have been dispens'd with, and righteously superseded, then I must own, that the Necessity of our Redemption by the Blood of Christ, and by a new Covenant of Grace in him, could not be so easily and so reasonably defended, as now it may. But if the Obligations of that first Covenant be irrefragable, and the Reasons and Authority of it never to be superseded, the Consequence is very plain. No Restitution of Mankind to his Original State but in a way of Righteousness, in such a way, and on such Conditions, as consists with the Ends, and Reasons, and Obligations of that

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Law.

Law. And 'tis this indeed which determines me so fixtly in Favour of Christianity: In that as I cannot but think the Honour of God, and the Authority of his Laws, and especially of that first most solemn Covenant, very much concern'd in the Conditions upon which we are to hope for Reconciliation and Eternal Happiness; so upon the most serious and impartial Examination of Things, I must solemnly profess, that I cannot find all those wise Reasons and good Ends so well serv'd in any other way and method of Pardon and Salvation; as in that of our Redemption by the Blessed Jesus, the Eternal Son of God. And this brings me to the,

III. Third General Head that I was to proceed upon, *viz.* to shew how much better, and more conspicuously, the Wisdom, and Justice, and Goodness, and Holiness of God are display'd in this Method of our Reconciliation and Salvation, which the Christian Gospel preaches by the Expiation and Atonement of Christ's Death, than in any other Way or Method besides that Mankind has Knowledge of. This

is what I shall now set myself to make good. And that particularly by enquiring,

1. Into the great Unreasonableness and Insufficiency of those other Methods, which the Enemies of Christianity mention and insist on. And thereby shewing,

2. How, all that either the Reasons, or the Authority of that first Law seem to require, is much better perform'd, and more amply fulfill'd by Jesus Christ, and by the Reconciliation publish'd in his Gospel.

1. The great Unreasonableness and Insufficiency of those other Methods that are mention'd and insisted on by our Enemies. And they, I think, are chiefly these two.

1. That God by Virtue of his Supreme Dominion and Power, has an undoubted Right of suspending and relaxing the Execution of his own Laws. And by that Right may pardon Sin, and restore Sinners, if he so think fit, without any Condition or Expiation at all. Or,

2. That if this be not satisfactory, yet the sincere *Repentance* of the Sinner, is of itself a *sufficient Expiation*; and

The Wisdom of God,

and without any Sacrifice, or Oblation enough to make our Peace, and to procure our Pardon.

These, I think, are the most material Pretences that our Adversaries ever yet alledg'd against the Reasonableness and Necessity of our Redemption by the Blood of Christ. And what real Force there is in either of them, shall be very fairly and candidly examin'd.

To pardon
Sin of meer
Arbitrary
Power, is
unworthy
of God.

1. The first Plea is, That God by his Sovereign Dominion has an undoubted Right of suspending and suspending the Execution of his own Laws. And by that Right may pardon Sin, and restore Sinners, if he so think fit, without any Condition or Expiation. This, I conceive, is what they mean, when they argue, *That God's Mercy is sufficient for his Justice, and that he is as much inclin'd to Pity as to Punish.* By which, if these Sayings are any thing to the Purpose, they must mean, that God in all Cases may as well Pity as Punish. And lies under no necessary Obligations to the one, more than to the other. He is, as they think, equally free to both, and

and determin'd wholly and solely by his own Arbitrary Will.

This is the Substance of their first Pretence. The main Force of which turns, they think, upon that single Point, God's Sovereign and Incontrotable Dominion over his Creatures. But the true Question in Dispute is not whether God has such a Sovereign Right, which we do not deny, but with all Humility acknowledge, and with the profoundest Veneration we Adore him on that account. But the Question is, whether it be equally for God's Honour, equally agreeable to the Wisdom of his Government, and the Reason of his Laws; to the Holiness of his Nature, and the solemn Sanction of his Covenants, to be reconcil'd to Sinners, by a meer Arbitrary Remission and Pardon, and without any previous Conditions at all, as by that Expiation and Atonement which the Gospel preaches. If it be, I must then own, that our Adversaries have gain'd their Point; and then adieu Christianity. But if it be not so, what Good will God's Incontrotable Power do them? Or what Comfort can they hope for from his
Sove-

Sovereign Right in those Cases, in which we have all the Reason in the World to believe that he will never exercise that Right? And that this is indeed the Case now before us, will, I persuade myself, evidently appear, when these three Things shall be consider'd.

*Inconsistent
with the Ob-
ligation of
the first Law*

1. How disagreeable such an Arbitrary Remission of Sins is to the eternal Reason, and unchangeable Authority and Obligation of that first Constitution and Law, which made Death and Misery the Punishment of Sin, and Immortality incompatible with a state of Sin. It was not an Arbitrary Decree, but had its Foundation and Establishment in the unchangeable Nature of Things: In the eternal Difference between Good and Evil. Establishments and Constitutions, that are arbitrarily order'd, may, I confess, be as arbitrarily alter'd and repeal'd; may be chang'd and superseded at the meer Will and Pleasure of the Lawgiver. But when the Nature of Things is fixt, and the Reason of Laws and Decrees unchangeable and everlasting, as founded on the unchangeable Nature and Perfections

ctions of God, there the Obligation and Authority of the Laws become immutable, and can never be dispens'd with. Such, I think, was the Nature of God's first Covenant with Man. By the indispensable Obligation of which we all become Miserable and Mortal. And indeed, why else is it appointed for all Men to Die? As far as can consist with the Reasons and Authority of his Laws, God is most certainly willing to be Good and Gracious to Mankind, and desirous by all means to promote their Eternal Happiness and Salvation. But beyond this he cannot in Wisdom go, nor is it reasonable to expect he should. This therefore I lay down as a fixt and certain Principle, and have already us'd it as the Test and Standard by which we are willing to be so far try'd and determin'd; That if there be any one Reason or Condition of pardoning Sin, or any one Mean or Method of restoring lost Mankind, more agreeable than the rest to the Nature and Perfections of God, the Wisdom and Justice of his Government, and to the Eternal Reasons and Authority of his Laws, whether it be our Enemies or
our

our own, that that we willingly acknowledge ought chiefly to be adher'd to, as the only Right way, as the best Religion, and the safest and truest Foundation of our Hope. But that it is not this of an Arbitrary Remission, will farther appear, if we consider again,

2. That as such an Arbitrary Remission is disagreeable to the eternal Obligation of that Law, so it's a Principle that has a great many Absurdities following, lies open to very dangerous and mischievous Conclusions that may be argu'd and drawn from it. Some of which are these,

*And with
the Necessi-
ty of a fu-
ture Judg-
ment.*

1. It affords, if it be allow'd, a very plausible and dangerous Objection against the Necessity of a future Judgment, and a future State. For if we look no farther than to God's Sovereign Dominion and Right, he has certainly the same Power to pardon one Sin, as another; and by Consequence, the same Right to pardon all Sins whatsoever, that he has to pardon any: For a Right so absolutely Supreme as His, has the same Authority in all those Instances, taken universally, and in the whole Lump together, that it has
in

In any one of them alone: And consequently, he that by his Sovereign Dominion forgives one Sin out of his meer Will and Pleasure, may by the same Right forgive all the Sins that ever were committed by any Law whatsoever, if he will. And therefore, if we suppose it not unreasonable for God by his uncontrollable Authority to exercise such a Right; What is this, but at the same time to suppose, that after all the Solemnity of his Divine Laws and Sacred Covenants, He may yet reasonably and righteously reverse them all? And if it be but to the Interest and Comfort of Sinners, may suspend them, and dispense with the Execution of them all at his Pleasure? *But how then shall God judge the World?* Rom. iii. 6. Or what good Reasons can there be for such a Judgment? or what Necessity is there of ever calling Men to account? All the Necessity of it that I know of from the Principles of Natural Reason, arises from the Essential Difference between Good and Evil, and the indispensable Necessity of Rewards and Punishments consequent thereupon. But if the Punishment of Sin be only a matter of Arbitrary Right, and not
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of Natural Justice, there can be no real and essential Difference between Good and Evil, nor any Necessity of future Rewards and Punishments. This one Principle then, if it were once allow'd, would wholly subvert the Necessity of such a Judgment, and destroy the Force of all the best Arguments that can be fetch'd from Reason only for it. For what two Things in Nature can be more contrary and inconsistent with each other, than these two, The Necessity of Justice in punishing Sin, and an Arbitrary Liberty to pardon it? If there be no fixt Principles of such Necessary and Natural Justice, then I confess that our Adversaries Opinion is Right and True. But if the Justice of God consists in *rendering to every Man according to his Works*, it makes the Punishment of Sinners as necessary as the Rewards of the Righteous. And how this Necessity, and an Arbitrary Recession from his Right in pardoning Sinners without any Satisfaction can possibly consist together, and with the Honour of God's Perfections, I am not able to discover.

God

God may indeed judge Mankind, if he will, say they, as their Sins give him a just Right, and make it reasonable for him so to do. But according to these Men, he may, notwithstanding all that Reason, and their Desert, let it alone, if he will, and pass all their Offences by. And then a Future Judgment is not necessary, because in the Consequence of this Principle, God may chuse whether he will judge Mankind or no. And yet if there be no Necessity of a Future Judgment, there is no Necessity of a Future State; and so all our best Moral Arguments for that also lose their Force. Thus you see what this Notion of God's pardoning all Sins by an Arbitrary Exercise of his Sovereign Right tends to. It utterly destroys all real Necessity of God's final Judgment of the World; and which is especially to be taken notice of, it bears particularly against that part of the Argument which concerns the Punishment of wicked Men, and which by Consequence should have the greatest Influence to restrain Mankind from Sin. From whence I observe,

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2. That this Notion can never be reconcil'd with the Necessity of Holiness in Men. For by what Arguments or Considerations shall we be able to make that Necessity appear? The true Principle of it, and the indispensable Obligation to it, I take to arise wholly from the Eternal, Unchangeable, Everlasting Reasons of those Laws which have enjoyn'd it. And if we once recede from this, how little have we to say in its Defence? Shall we say, that God has made Virtue, and Justice, and Fidelity necessary by the Laws of Nature and Revelation? I own, that he has grafted in us Principles of Goodness, which, if carefully improv'd, would lead us to these Things; and He has confirm'd them by the Doctrins of the Gospel. But what if Mankind grows negligent of these Obligations, and regards neither the Worship of God, nor Honesty among Men? God, it seems, after all, may pass this Contempt by, if he will, and is under no necessary Obligations in Wisdom, Holiness, or Justice to do otherwise.

If

in the Redemption of Man.

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If this were allow'd, all Sinners might live in great Hopes of Impunity. For, according to these Principles, there would be no necessary Obligations at all of Punishing Sinners. But more might then be said for Pardoning, than for the Punishment of 'em. For that Love and Pity which God has towards all Mankind, as they are his Creatures, and that sincere Desire, which of his Natural Goodness he must needs have, that we should not perish, will doubtless incline him to shew Mercy, wherever he is not under some strong Obligations to the contrary. And this Love would be a better Reason for the Pardon of all Sin, than what can be brought for the Punishment of any, if all depended entirely on his Will in the meer Exercise of Dominion and Power. For we cannot suppose, that a God of Mercy, and Love, and who is earnestly desirous of the Happiness of his Creatures, will ever condemn any such Creature to Misery and Torments, whom He may with equal Justice, and without a Blemish to his Attributes, or Laws, or the Wisdom of his Government forgive. And so,

The Wisdom of God,

if there be nothing in the Reason of Things, and the unchangeable Principles of Justice, that makes the Punishment of Sin and Sinners Necessary, the Love of God to Mankind will make the Pardon of all Sins Reasonable. And what Trifles then are all God's Laws and most solemn Denunciations, and how unnecessary Things are Virtue and Holiness, when, according to these Mens Principles, the greatest Sinner, after all his most obstinate Provocations, would have more cause to hope for Pardon, than to be afraid of Punishment? And what a Discouragement is this to all hearty and sincere Endeavours in Religion? For who would torment himself in the ungrateful Severities of true Repentance, and be at the Trouble to mortify those Lusts, and subdue those Vices, which he might even as safely pamper and indulge? And yet it must be so, if all depends wholly on God's Arbitrary Exercise of his Sovereign Right. For tho' it be said, that he may justly Punish, if he will, yet we can have no good Reason to believe that a Compassionate God ever will destroy those Creatures, whom he
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may with equal Reason, and Justice, and Wisdom save. Every Creature has reason to hope for all the Mercy, and Clemency, and Pity, and Compassion, that it's not unreasonable, and unworthy the Divine Perfections of God to vouchsafe him. If therefore it's no Dishonour to God, nor at all unworthy of him to pardon Sins Arbitrarily, Repentance and Holiness cannot be Necessary, in that God may save Men without them, if he will.

If then these Consequences appear disagreeable to the common Sentiments of Mankind, as destroying all the necessity of Virtue and a good Life, and cutting off at one Blow all the Force of Religion to restrain us, let the whole World judge if the Principles of them are not also unworthy of God, and disagreeable to his Perfections. Which is most for his Glory, to found the Punishment of Sinners so wholly in the meer Arbitrary Exercise of Supreme Dominion, as to make it altogether unnecessary to be inflicted; or on the Eternal Reason and Difference of Things, which makes the Misery of the Sinner not only Just, but Reasonable and Necessary too? Which O-

The Wisdom of God,

pinion is fittest to be embrac'd, that which destroys the Necessity of Religion and Holiness, or that which establishes it upon an everlasting and unchangeable Foundation? But,

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3. From hence too we may easily discern how dishonourable such an Arbitrary Remission of Sins must be to the Holiness of God, and to the Wisdom of his Government. For where is the Wisdom of Enacting such Laws, and Establishing such Covenants, as there are no fixt Reasons, or necessary Obligations of ever putting in Execution? Or what can be a greater Blemish to his Holiness, than to supersede at once the Necessity of both Virtue and Religion? And yet wholly to suspend the Execution of his Laws by a meer Arbitrary Remission, is indeed to supersede the Necessity of them both. What Indication can Men and Angels have of the spotless Purity of the Holy God, if there be no certain Evidence, no visible Fruits of his Indignation and Displeasure against Iniquity? And what Evidence or Token can there be of the Reality of his Hatred and Indignation against Sin, if it were agreeable to Reason and Justice,

Justice, to expect from him an Universal Pardon by this meer Arbitrary receding from his Right? No; if God be indeed Holy, such an Arbitrary Exercise of his Right must be unworthy of him, and consequently not reasonably to be expected from him.

And this is all that we contend for here. Not to dispute God's^s Sovereign Right, nor his Compassion to the Miseries of his Creatures, nor his Readiness to forgive any Offences whatever he pleases, provided it be not in such an Arbitrary way as shall seem inconsistent with his Natural and Essential Justice, and Wisdom, and Purity; but upon such Considerations and Conditions as are consistent with the Honour of all these. That he cannot honourably shew Mercy but on some such Conditions, is what we do indeed plead for, and cannot, in regard to his Perfections, recede from, while we observe an Essential Holiness in his Nature, and his Laws wisely founded on the unchangeable, eternal Reason and Difference of Things. But,

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4. *Lastly.* To pardon by a meer Arbitrary Exercise of Dominion and Right, in superseding the Authority of his Laws without imposing any Conditions on us, has also this very great and intolerable Evil in it; that it finally resolves all the Reason of the Salvation and Damnation of Mankind into the meer Arbitrary Will, and Despotick Power of God; which is what the Principles of these, of all Men, seem by no means to admit of.

For what is the Reason why any one Man shall be sav'd, and another condemn'd? It must be, according to their Notions, only because in one Case God will recede from his Right, and exercise an Arbitrary Power in pardoning Sin, and in the other he will not. But you will say, the one Repents, and the other does not. What then? Has not God, whose Dominion is Universal, and absolutely Uncontrolable, a Right to pardon the Impenitent, as well as the Penitent, if he thinks fit? But you will say, that the want of Repentance makes it unfit and unreasonable for him to pardon him. If it does, then we see, that

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an unconditionate Pardon by a meer Exercise of Sovereign Dominion and Right is not reasonable, is not to be hop'd for or expected. But, why does the want of Repentance make it unreasonable for God to pardon a Sinner? It is only because he thinks himself in Justice concern'd to expect some such Conditions of Reconciliation, as may make the Pardon consistent with the Honour of his glorious Attributes, and of his Laws, which a meer Arbitrary Remission is not. Grant me this, and it's all that I now contend for. And then we are only to consider, what those Conditions are, which God seems in regard to his Honour oblig'd to expect from us. But if you place all in a meer Despotick Exercise of Right and Will, God has the same Right to pardon the Impenitent as the Penitent, and him that Humbles himself, as him that does not do so. And if God reasonably and justly may exercise that Right out of meer Arbitrary Will and Pleasure, he may, if he will, do so to the Impenitent, as well as to him that Repents. And why then does the Wicked perish? only because God will not exercise this

this Right in his behalf, which he reasonably and justly might, if he would. So that in short, you must either come to such fixt and establisht Rules of Righteousness and Justice founded on the Principles of Holiness, Reason, and the Eternal Authority of God's Laws against Sin, as make it inconsistent with his Honour and Righteousness to recede from them; and this is with us to make an Arbitrary Remission Unreasonable and Unrighteous; or else you must resolve all into such meer Exercise of Sovereign Dominion and Power, as may extend to the Impenitent, as well as to him that Repents. And if such an Arbitrary Exercise of Right were not Unreasonable, God would be under no necessary Obligations to punish either. And then and thus, the only Reason why any Man is either Sav'd or Condemn'd, would be only this; God would have it so. In the one Case he exercis'd his Sovereign Right, and so the Man was Sav'd. In the other he would not do it, and so the Man must Perish: Not, it seems, by any fixt Reasons or Laws of Justice founded in the Essential and Eternal Nature of Things, but only
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in the meer Sovereign Will of the Supreme. And is this Justice, and Righteousness, and Holiness? I doubt it looks too much like Tyranny and Cruelty to be imputed to a Gracious and Merciful God. For I verily believe, the Love, and Mercy, and sincere Affection of God to all Men to be so infinitely Great, that nothing but the necessity of Vengeance to vindicate the Honour of his Justice and Holiness, and the Wisdom and Authority of his Government, and the Eternal Reasons and Obligations of his Covenants, makes him to afflict them for their Sins. And I verily believe, that he would for their sakes, and in order to their Salvation, recede from any Rights, that he reasonably and honourably could. It's the Necessity of Vengeance, and of the Severity of Punishments, to vindicate the Glory, and Wisdom, and Justice of God, that make the inflicting them to be thought no Violations of the Divine Compassion and Love. But to punish beyond the Rules of Reason and Necessity by a meer Arbitrary Despotick Will, favours, methinks, too much of Cruelty to be imputable to him.

These

These then are some of the mischievous and absurd Consequences of pleading for an Arbitrary Remission of Sins from God by his meer Sovereign Dominion and Right. And from the Consideration of these Things together, I cannot but draw this one, I think, very plain and certain Conclusion, *viz.* That one great Reason of God's dealing with us in such a Method as our Religion sets forth, and as that I am now defending, was to make us sensible, that he does nothing Arbitrarily in the Business of our Salvation. And that, because he will not that any Man should lay his final Ruin and Condemnation at his door, as tho' he had been desirous of the Death of any Man; He is rather solicitous to convince us, that he has graciously invited us to be Happy on such Conditions as are agreeable to the fixt establish'd Rules of Justice and Holiness, which have their Foundation in the very Perfections of his Divine Nature; by a Conformity to which we may be Happy, if we will. That to this end he has so far laid by his Supreme Right as to enter into Covenants and Obligations with us, that
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require no more, than what the Holiness of his Nature, and the Eternal Reason of his Laws have made necessary. That the sacred Authority of such solemn Sanctions, he will not, he cannot give up and supersede: That therefore if we will be wicked and obstinate in Iniquity, after all that God has done by his Laws, and Commands, and Threatnings to restrain us, we must blame our selves if we finally miscarry. His Rules of Justice and Holiness are in such Covenants and Decrees eternally fixt, and unchangeably establisht, according to which we must have our final Sentence. He will not break thro' them by any Exercise of Arbitrary Power, whether it be to Save, or to Destroy us. But,

3. Besides the Unreasonableness of such an Arbitrary Remission, and the Mischiefs that would attend the Expectation of it, we should consider also, on what mistaken Notions this Opinion seems to have been built. And here I must observe, that all who seem to favour such a Doctrin, consider Justice to be nothing else but not doing wrong. For tho' they define it to be *a rendring to every one their due,* yet

The Foundation of this Mistake laid in a false Notion of the Justice of God.

yet Punishment and Misery are not so due, as that it would be an Injury to the Offender to forbear inflicting them: For nothing is accounted injurious to any Man, that is to his Advantage. So altho' inflicting Punishment is due on God's part, as by every Transgression he acquires a Right of inflicting it, if he will, yet, as they plead, *God may recede from his own Right* whenever he pleases. And if he does so by refusing to take the Advantage of his Creatures, and forbearing to inflict the Punishment deserv'd; this, say they, is not unjust, because it's only passing by his own Right, and is no Wrong either to the Offender, or to any other of his Fellow-Creatures. And if he may thus forgive Sins to any, or all his Creatures, without doing them any Wrong, his Punishing, or his Pardoning, depends wholly on his Arbitrary Will. He may Punish, if he will; and it's not unjust so to do, because the Sinner has deserv'd it. And, say they, he may Pardon, if he will, and that without either Condition or Atonement, because in so doing he does no Wrong.

This

This is the Sum of their Arguing; concerning which I own the Truth of their first Principle laid down, that God in receding from his Right is not guilty of any Injustice to the Sinner so forgiven. And I bless God for the Comfort that we all find in this Assertion. But here's the Weakness of the Conclusion drawn from it, that in all their Scheme, God is consider'd only with respect to his Dominion, and Sovereign Personal Right, and nothing is regarded but his not acting against the equitable Right or Interest of his offending Creatures; whereas in this Case he ought rather to be consider'd as a Holy God, and as the Righteous Governor and Judge of the Universe; and with regard not to his Dominion and Right only, but with respect to the Purity of his Divine Nature, the Wisdom of his Government, and the Reasons and Authority of his Laws, and an equitable and righteous Judicature between all his reasonable Creatures. In that, if in the final Judgment of the World, he should be suppos'd to act against any of these, it will be as much a Blemish to his Attributes, and to his Righteousness, as
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if he acted against the Right of any of his Creatures whatsoever ; for they are both alike Inconsistent with his Divine Attributes and absolute Perfections. Therefore it is that all Divines observe in God a twofold Justice, or Righteousness : The one is call'd *Universal*, which is nothing else than his Sanctity, and the Universal Rectitude of his Nature, by which he can do nothing that shall be Inconsistent with, or a Blemish to his Divine Perfections. The other is call'd *Particular*, by which God ties himself to do nothing contrary to a Natural or Covenanted Right, that he may be thought to have granted to his Creatures ; the doing which would look like doing wrong. Now, tho' the superseding the Obligation, Authority and Execution of his Laws is not unjust in this latter Sense, yet it is in the former. It is no Wrong to his Creatures ; but it is a Blemish and a Dishonour to himself. And this is altogether as Disagreeable to, and as Impossible with God, as the other. And here lies the plain Fallacy of our Adversaries Pretence. If we consider God as a Righteous Judge, and an Universal King, governing all Things
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by the Universal Rectitude and Harmony of his Divine Perfections, and by Righteous Laws that spring from thence; 'tis not enough that he does no Wrong to Offenders. This Justice consists, as St. Paul describes it, *in rendering to every one according to his Works,* Rom. ii. 6. i. e. by giving both Rewards to the Righteous, and Punishments to the Wicked. And this is indeed that Righteousness of God in this Question to be consider'd. 'Tis the Rectitude of the Divine Nature, which consists in keeping up the eternal Difference between Good and Evil, by distinguishing the Conditions of Men in another World, as they have been either Good or Bad in this. And this Justice not only gives him a Right to punish impenitent Sinners, but makes that, according to the Tenor of his Laws, as indispensable a part of Righteousness, as the rewarding the Holy and Obedient. For tho' to recede from his Right of Punishing by an Arbitrary Pardon is not Unjust to the Sinner that deserv'd it, yet it's highly Unjust and Injurious to God himself. It's directly contrary to his universal Rectitude and Perfections, to the

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Wisdom of his Government, and the Reasons of his Legislature, and the Divine Authority of his Laws. Right and Dominion are not the only Things here to be consider'd, but the wise and reasonable Exercise of them by a just Judge, and a wise and righteous Governor. And whatsoever is done by that Sovereignty alone, contrary to the universal Rectitude of his Nature, and the Reasons and Obligations of his Laws, is Unjust in the latter Sense, tho' not in the former. It's contrary to, and inconsistent with the universal distributive Justice of God, altho' it's no direct Injustice, or Personal Wrong to any one of Mankind; and as such, it's altogether unreasonable for Mankind to expect it from him.

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I have done with this Head, after that I have recommended the serious Consideration of it to all that hope for Salvation by Jesus Christ, as well as to those who are Enemies to this our Holy Faith. In that I am afraid that there is no one Thing which so much countenances the Professors even of Christianity itself, to live in the manifest Neglect of its Virtues and Duties, and to continue wicked in this
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Religion, notwithstanding its most earnest Endeavours to bring them to Repentance, than the tacit Expectation of such Mercy in their Pardon, as upon a serious Consideration will be found very inconsistent with God's Wisdom and Honour to grant. They consider him, as having a Sovereign Right by virtue of his Dominion, of doing what he will. And while they look no farther than on his Sovereign Will, they never discern the necessary Obligations that he is under to act consistently with his Honour and Divine Perfections, and with the Authority of his Laws; and in Consequence of that, unavoidably to punish Sinners. He may, I freely confess, do what he will by virtue of his Right and Power; but then it is as great a Truth, that he never will do any thing that shall be a Blemish to his Honour, and to the wise Reasons of his Government. If there be Holiness in his Nature, Reason and Authority in his Government, He will not recede from the Laws and Institutions of the Gospel, in the Pardon and Salvation of the Christian part of Mankind. He has shewn by the miserable Calamities,

and the bitter Sorrows by which he is found to punish Sin in this Life, and by that Death which passes on all for the Transgressions of the first Covenant, how Dangerous and Unreasonable it is to expect, that he will supersede the Reasons, and dispense with the Authority and Obligations of the second. In a Word, if there be any Truth in all that has been said on this Occasion, it all concludes in this one Remark, *viz.* That Sin not only deserves Punishment, but is such a necessary Reason to God why he should punish it, as he can never in Wisdom and Honour totally dispense with; and consequently he is no more Arbitrarily indifferent as to Punishing, than he originally was as to Prohibiting of it: Nor is the one less disagreeable than the other. He has indeed a Right over us, but he never will exercise this Right to the Blemish of his other Excellencies, Wisdom, Justice and Holiness. Let us therefore *Fear,*

lest a promise being made us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it. If we keep the Condition sincerely on our part, God is Faithful, who has promis'd, and will not deceive

Heb. iv. 1

ceive us. But as much as we deviate from the Laws and Rules there prescrib'd, or are negligent of that great Duty of Repentance, so much do we in proportion lose our Assurance, and destroy our Hope. I can easily grant, nay, I have maintain'd above, that God of his great Mercy is willing to save Sinners, and to preserve them from Vengeance and Destruction as far as can be consistent with the Honour of his Attributes, and the Authority of his Laws, and the eternal Reason of Things upon which those Laws are founded. But as it's altogether unreasonable and absurd to imagine, that he should ever so prostitute his Honour, and the Wisdom of his Government, as to recede from these; so I am inclin'd to believe, that the only Conditions upon which he can honourably, or ever will pardon the Sins of Christians, are those deliver'd in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And consequently, to feed our selves with Hopes of gentler Usage, and greater Mercy than what is there promis'd, cannot be without the highest Folly, and the greatest Danger; and will doubtless in the Event be

Gal. vi.
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found as fatal and mischievous to our Souls, as it is disagreeable to the spotless Holiness, and absolute Perfections of God. *Be not then deceiv'd, God is not mock'd; whatsoever a Man soweth that shall he also reap. He that soweth to the Flesh shall of the Flesh reap Corruption and Death; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap Everlasting Life. And thus we come to,*

Serm. III. II. The Second General Pretence of the Enemies of Christianity, *viz.* That if an Arbitrary Remission of Sins be Unreasonable, if somewhat of Expiation and Atonement be Necessary, yet Repentance alone is a sufficient Expiation, and of itself enough to make our Peace, and to prevail with God to Pardon and Forgive us. Thus far they go in exprefs Words, *That Repentance is the true and only Expiation of Sin; and that bare Repentance is a sufficient Compensation for an infinite Offence committed against an Infinite Being.* And this which makes all expiatory Sacrifices Unnecessary and Unreasonable, destroys at one Blow the Necessity of the Death of Christ, and the Wisdom of God in our Redemption thereby. My

My present Business then must be, to lay before you the Falseness of this Principle; and to let you see, that Repentance alone is not, cannot be a sufficient Compensation or Atonement for Sins committed against God. And to this End we must consider,

1. What is meant by Expiation of Sins, and Satisfaction to the Justice of God for 'em. And then we shall the better see,

2. Whether Repentance alone can, and does answer all the Ends and Purposes of it.

1. What is meant by Expiation of Sins, and Satisfaction to the Justice of God in order to the Remission of them. This ought to be the more carefully consider'd, in that the great Difficulty we have to make Men sensible of the meritorious Satisfaction of Christ's Passion, and of the Necessity of that to our Peace and Pardon, arises from their not apprehending rightly what by that Satisfaction and Expiation are intended. Some have the very same Notion of satisfying for Sins, that they have of paying of Debts; upon Payment of which there is nothing more to be expected or demanded from the

Mischief's arising from mistaken Notions of Atonement.

The Wisdom of God,

Debtor, nor any Place left for free Grace and Mercy in Remission and Forgiveness. Others look upon this Satisfaction as the only Motive and Incitement to Pity, Compassion and Mercy, and thereupon think it an Absurdity, that an offended Person should *appoint a Mediator to himself*, in that *this shews him to be reconcil'd beforehand*. These, and for ought I know, a great many more strange Inconsistencies and Absurdities have been charg'd upon the Doctrin of Christ's Expiation and Satisfaction, only thro' the want of right Apprehensions what the true Evangelical Expiation and Satisfaction is. To the clearing of this Matter therefore it will be requisite,

I. That we rightly State and Explain the true Notion of Satisfaction or Atonement in general.

II. That we shew from whence the Reason and Necessity of it, with respect to God, arises.

III. To what End and Purpose it is directed and intended.

IV. What

IV. What is necessarily requir'd to answer all that End.

V. *Lastly.* To vindicate the Truth and Propriety of this Account, by shewing how it solves the chief Difficulties and Objections that are rais'd about, and against this Doctrin. These Things will, I hope, set us in a true Light as to this whole Matter. And from all this together, I doubt not but that we shall easily make appear how Trifling and Insufficient Repentance alone must needs be to answer these great and glorious Purposes. But,

I. We should rightly state the Nature of Satisfaction, and Explain what is meant by Atonement or Expiation, ^{*The Nature of Expiation explain'd.*} in that a Mistake here may be of mischievous Consequence, and lead us on to some very erroneous and dangerous Opinions: And I am content at present, that both of 'em should be thus describ'd. The offering the offended Party some such Conditions and Considerations of Reconciliation for an Offence committed, as he may think fit, and worthy of his Acceptance, in order

der to a Pardon and Remission of the Punishment deserv'd by that Offence. Which, when it is done, the offended Party may reasonably be said to be Satisfied. And he that offers such Conditions, upon the Acceptance of them, may be said to have Expiated, or Satisfied for his Offence. And this Expiation or Atonement imports, and supposes the Criminal to be so far purg'd and clear'd of his Guilt, as thereby to be exempted from the Necessity of suffering the Punishment that was due unto him. This is in short the true Nature and Meaning of Satisfaction in general. Which, apply'd to the Case in hand, will teach us, that by satisfying the Justice of God for Sins, and making Atonement or Expiation for them, no more is intended, than offering him such Conditions and Considerations in order to the Pardon and Forgiveness of Mankind, as may be fit and worthy of his Acceptance to that End. And that until some such worthy Conditions, and acceptable Considerations are offer'd, the Sins of Man cannot properly be said to be Expiated. What those

those Conditions ought to be, shall be consider'd by and by.

II. As to the Necessity of such Ex-^{Its Necessi-}piation, it arises wholly from the un-^{ty proceeds}changeable Reasons and Authority of ^{from the}God's Laws, and the irreversible Ob-^{Necessity of}ligations that the Sinner is thereby un-^{Punish-}der to suffer Punishment for his Sin. For if there was no obligatory Reason or Necessity of Punishment, there would, I think, be no obligatory Reason or Necessity of Satisfaction or Expiation. Where the Reason and Authority of the Law is in itself indifferent, and dispensable at Pleasure, there, I must confess, I do not see the Necessity of Atonement, but that an Arbitrary Remission may be Reasonable and Just. So that the very Supposition of any necessary Satisfaction or Expiation destroys, and is utterly inconsistent with an Arbitrary Remission; in that it supposes, and is wholly founded on a Supposition of the Necessity of the Punitive or Vindictive Justice of God, arising from the unchangeable Reasons, and irreversible Obligations of his Divine Sanctions, Laws or Covenants. Which, if they could
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in Reason, and Justice, and consistently with the Holiness of God be vacated and superseded, I cannot see how any Satisfaction or Expiation could then be necessary; but the Pardon might be Absolute and Arbitrary. No two Principles in Nature, being to my Apprehension more Inconsistent and Repugnant, than the Necessity of Atonement for Sin, and yet the no Necessity of Punishment.

The Necessity then of an Atonement supposes the Necessity of Punishment. And the indispensable Necessity of punishing Sin, and of inflicting the particular Punishment denounc'd by any Covenant or Law against it, arises from the obligatory Authority of that Law, and from the eternal Reasons and Purposes on which that Covenant is founded. Where the Original Principles and Reasons of a Law are Everlasting and Unchangeable, there the Obligation of the Law must needs be Indispensable. As therefore I have shewn in my former Discourses, that the Reason of, and Motive to all God's Laws against Sin, and of the Punishments threaten'd upon the Commission of it, had their Original Foundation in
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the Holiness of his Nature, and were intended to his Honour and Glory, in attesting his utter Hatred and Abhorrence of it, and his earnest Desire to prevent it; it cannot be, but that the Execution of such Laws one way or other, must be as necessary as the first Enacting them. For to what End was the threatning of Punishment annex to the Sanction of the Law? It was to deter Men from the Transgression of it, and particularly by bearing Witness that that Transgression was a Thing extremely offensive, and disagreeable, and displeasing to God. It had its regard to God, and to his Honour, who in his Essential Holiness was solicitous to prevent Iniquity, as well as to Man who was to be restrain'd from it. And therefore in a Law which has its Foundation thus in the Perfections and Attributes of God, I cannot see but that some kind of Execution of the Vengeance threaten'd becomes as Sacred, and Solemn, and Inviolable, as any other Part of the Divine Sanction. And thereby the Punishment of the Sin is as necessary, and as indispensably requir'd to vindicate the Honour and Harmony of
God's

God's Perfections, Wisdom, Goodness, Justice and Holiness as the forbidding it. There being no other way of making known his Abhorrence and Detestations of it; and that his just Indignation against it, which after it is committed is the proper Evidence of his Essential Holiness; but by the Severity of that Vengeance which he shall execute against it. Nor can I see any Reason, why we should be tender of asserting such a Punitive Justice in God, which as it has its Foundation in his Absolute and Essential Holiness; so it is particularly design'd only to vindicate his Honour, and the Glory of his Attributes, and to make known the Disagreeableness of Sin, and his hearty Displeasure against it. Such a Vindictive Justice seems to me, to be a Divine Attribute, as Essential to, and Inseparable from his Perfections as Holiness itself; in that when the Threatning becomes ineffectual to prevent Iniquity, there is no other way left for God to attest the Sanctity of his Nature, and the Reality of his Aversion to, and Abhorrence of the Evil actually committed, but by the Severity of the Punishment that he shall

shall inflict. And therefore when He had by an establish'd Law and Covenant denounc'd Misery and Death against Sinners, and thus decreed that none should be completely Happy but those only who are absolutely Righteous, it was necessary that the Punishments threaten'd should be inflicted, and no Deliverance and Escape be granted to Mankind, only on some such Conditions and Considerations as he in his Divine Wisdom should think equivalent to the Punishment of the Sinner, and on that account worthy of his Acceptance and sufficiently for his Honour in order to a Pardon. This is what we call Satisfaction and Expiation; the Necessity of which proceeds from the Original Reason and Authority of God's Laws, and the Obligation that from thence indispensably arises to the Punishment of Sin. The Consideration of which will help us to discover,

III. What are the Ends and Purposes to which such Satisfaction and Atonement are directed and intended. *The End of it is, to consult the Honour of God in the Mercy that he shews.* Now this shews plainly, that the great End and Purpose of such Satisfaction must

must be, to consult the Honour and Glory of God in the Conditions of the Salvation and Deliverance of the Sinner, who by his Transgression was become obnoxious to Misery and Death, and could find no other way to escape. All such Satisfaction supposes the necessary Misery of the Sinner without it, and consequently the absolute Necessity of some such Atonement in order to a Pardon. Thus the whole of our Gospel Satisfaction speaks out, I think, very plainly. With respect to Man therefore the great End of such Atonement is our Salvation; that we may thereby be deliver'd from that Death, and from those Torments in Death, which without such a Mediation and Satisfaction we could not possibly have been deliver'd from. This is the true Purport and Intention of the Satisfaction and Atonement made by the Blood of Jesus, *viz. That he might deliver us from the Wrath to come.*

1 Theff.
i. 10.

And this was sufficiently represented and prefigur'd by all the Sacrifices and Expiations under the Law of Moses, and what was aim'd at and intended almost every where, where Expiatory

piatory Sacrifices were in use. The true Meaning of all which was no more than such Satisfaction to the Vengeance or Punitive Justice of God, as might make way for Pardon and Reconciliation to Offenders: *He shall* Levit. iv. *make Atonement for him as concerning his Sin, and it shall be forgiven him,* says Moses in a great many Verses of one Chapter, signifying to us, that the Atonement was nothing else than offering something to the Punitive Justice of God, which might be thought so far to satisfy the Purposes and Ends of his Laws, as to make way for the Pardon of the Sinner.

But with respect to God, and the Reasons and Conditions on which this Deliverance is exhibited, the true End and Purpose of such Satisfaction is, to consult the Honour and Authority of the offended Party, as well as the Safety of the Offenders. That the Mercy and Grace exhibited may be no Blemish to the Glory of his Divine Attributes and Perfections, nor derogate from the just Authority, nor violate the unchangeable eternal Reason of his Laws. For, as has been said already, the great Necessity and Reason

of inflicting the Punishment denounc'd is to this End, to vindicate the Honour of the offended God, and the Authority of the violated Law. And all the Necessity of Satisfaction is upon the same account, that his Person and Authority may not be expos'd to Contempt in the Remission of Sins, nor the wise Ends and Purposes of his Laws and Decrees be superseded.—— And therefore, tho' when we spake of the Nature of Satisfaction in general, we express'd it by such Conditions and Considerations, as the offended Party should think fit and worthy of his Acceptance to that End; yet when the Reason and Ground of his exacting that Satisfaction comes to be more closely consider'd, and better understood, we shall soon see that it is not an Arbitrary and indifferent Thing what those Conditions are to be; but they must be such as shall effectually consult and salve the Honour of the Lawgiver, and defend the Authority of the Law, such as make manifest the Wisdom of his Government, by answering and corresponding to the Original Purpose, and unchangeable Reasons of his Legislature. What comes not up to all this,

this, cannot justly be call'd Satisfaction, in that it comes not up to the Reasons upon which that seems necessarily to be requir'd, which is the Honour of the Lawgiver, and the Authority of his Laws. Whatever recedes from this, is superseding these Reasons and Obligations; is indeed degenerating from an Establishment of Righteousness and Justice, into that meer Arbitrary Administration, which I have already shew'd you, is to be exploded as dishonourable to God, and mischievous among Men.

This then is in short the true Notion, Reason, End and Design of Expiation. It is the offering some such Conditions and Considerations in order to the Pardon and Remission of Sin, as may make the Deliverance and Salvation of the Sinner to be without any Blemish to the Glory and Honour of God, which I have shew'd you at large, that an Arbitrary and Inconditionate Remission is not: Such Conditions and Considerations as may serve the very Ends and Purposes to which the Punishment of Sin its self is intended. Thus the Victime, and particularly the Scape-goat, is said to *bear the Sins* Levit. of xvi. 22.

The Wisdom of God,

of the People, as it bears the Punishment necessary to the Pardon of their Sins. So also it may be said to *take away Sins*, only as by suffering instead of the Offender, it takes away the necessary Obligation to Punishment, that the Offender himself lay under to the Justice of God. This is Expiation; it is so far taking away the Guilt of Sin, as that Guilt included a necessary Obligation to Punishment. Its taking it away, not in a Literal, Natural Sense, for that is impossible, and is to make the Sin that has been committed, to be uncommitted, which is a Contradiction; but in a *Legal and Judicial Sense*: As that implies to absolve the Criminal so far from his Guilt and Punishment, as that it shall not be judg'd in the Eye of the Law absolutely necessary to be imputed and inflicted; but leaves the Offender, without any Blemish to the Attributes of God, and the Authority of his Laws, a fit Object of the Divine Mercy and Favour. The Expiations and Atone-ments requir'd by the Law of *Moses*, were chiefly to this End, and only look'd upon as so many Mediatory Considerations satisfying the Divine Punish-

Punitive Justice or Vengeance, as might dissolve the Obligations which the Sinner lay under to Misery, and suffering for his Sins, and make way for Reconciliation and Deliverance, without any Blemish, to the Honour and Holiness of God. From what has been said on this Head, we may discover the better,

IV. What it is that seems Necessary to serve this wise and glorious End, and to make up such Satisfaction as seems thus necessarily to be requir'd. And here, as we have seen already, that after Men have run into, and committed the Sins which God forbade, the Authority of his Laws, and the Obligation of his Covenants, are not to be absolutely revers'd and repeal'd, but only such conditions to be offer'd, in order to our Deliverance, as may consist with the Honour of God; so accordingly,

1. The first Thing necessary to such an Atonement, must be such a Severity of Punishment antecedent to our Pardon, as shall sufficiently attest to Men and Angels, that God's Holiness is Absolute, and his Hatred of Sin

No Expiation of Sin without Punishment.

Real, and his Detestation and Abhorrence of it Hearty and Sincere. For if there be not, as I think there is no other way in the Nature of Things known to Men, by which the Greatness and Reality of God's Holiness, and Displeasure against Sin after it is committed, can be made manifest but by the Punishment of it; then, according as the Severity of this kind is greater or less, such will be the Apprehensions of all Creatures, whether Men or Angels, of the Greatness of God's Displeasure, and of the Reasonableness of his Righteous Indignation. And it seems most highly probable, that this very Thing made it necessary for God, when Man had sinned, to bring Mortality and Misery upon him for his Sin, pursuant to the Tenor of his Covenant. It was to prevent the Dishonour that must have attended on Impunity by these mischievous Constructions that might have been made of it to the Disadvantage of his Holiness, and of his Essential and Eternal Detestation of Iniquity. To prevent which, he resolv'd by the bitter and sorrowful Fruits of Sin, to let Men see his Righteous Displeasure against

gainst it; Having indeed then no other way, to attest the Greatness of his Wrath. And if what happen'd under the first Covenant was, as we have reason to believe, for our Example, and to instruct us what is to be look'd for, and expected under the second; we are from thence sufficiently taught, that there is no Pardon, no Reconciliation to be expected without some such Severity of Punishment, as by bearing Witness to the Holiness of God, and his Hatred of Sin, may both consult his Honour, and keep up the Authority of his Laws against it. But,

2. This shews not only the Necessi- ^{Nor with-}
ty of Punishment in general, but also, ^{out the}
and more especially, that there is no ^{Death of}
Pardon reasonably to be expected, but ^{the Expi-}
by some such Punishment of Sin in the ^{ator.}
Person of him that takes upon him to ex-
piate it, as must needs include the Death
of the Expiator. Death is the appoint-
ed Punishment of Sin: He therefore
that undertakes to Atone for it, must
be subject to the Law, and Die for
our Deliverance. Thus, I think, we
are to understand St. Paul, when he
says, *That without Blood there is no Re-* ^{Heb. xi.}

mission of Sins. It is true according to the Law of *Moses*, in which there was allow'd no Legal Purgation of Uncleanness without some Sacrifice of Atonement: But it's more especially true of that Mysterious Administration and Dispensation of God in the Salvation of sinful Man, of which that *Mosaic Law* was only a Figure and a Type. It's true in the Decrees and Purposes of God in his Mercies to Men, founded on the eternal and unchangeable Reason of Things, that *without Blood* (i. e.) without Death, without such a Sacrifice for Sin, by which God may make known the Greatness of his Displeasure, and by the Severity of his Indignation preserve his Honour, and the Harmony of his Attributes, no Pardon, no Remission, no Reconciliation is to be expected. This was not only what, in all the Sacrifices of old, seem'd to be aim'd at by those that offer'd them; but indeed it's the very Thing that God by the Original Institution of Sacrifices intended to possess Man's Mind with a lively Sense and Apprehension of. And therefore it's Childish, and no way becoming Men that pretend to Learning and Philosophy,

phy, to suggest that the first Institution of Sacrifices was owing to the mistaken and superstitious Notions of Mankind. Not only the Old Testament, which is both a more Ancient and a more Authentick History than any that they can produce in favour of that fond Notion, gives us a quite different Account of them; but also the very Construction to be made of such a Practice, and the exact Correspondency of it, as a Type to the great and real Expiation which God had ordain'd should be made by the Death of his Son, shew plainly whom that Institution must own as its Author. It shews plainly, that it could come from none but that God who intended by this means to prepare Man's Mind for the Doctrin of Christ, by the Establishment of such a Practice as should make 'em sensible that there could be no Expiation of Sin without Punishment, and that particularly without the Blood and Death of him that should undertake to Expiate it.

All which, I think, is sufficiently confirm'd by observing again, That the first Oblation of Sacrifices was in Consequence of the Promise that
God

God had made of a Saviour, who, by *breaking the Serpent's Head*, should defeat his Councils for our Ruin, and restore Mankind to Life and Immortality. And as we read of no Sacrifice till after the Fall of *Adam*, and the Promis'd Seed for our Redemption; so I do not know but that the Acceptableness of *Abel's* Sacrifice might consist in a ready Obedience to God's Appointment of such a Victim, whose Death and Blood were a fit Representation of the Passion of our Saviour for our Sins. The acting in a ready Compliance with such a Divine Institution, is justly and properly imputable to

Heb.xi. 4. Faith. Thus by Faith *Abel* offer'd a more excellent Sacrifice than *Cain*, by which he obtain'd witness that he was Righteous, God testifying of his Gifts. Which Faith *Cain* wanting, and thereby chusing an Oblation less proper and suitable to that Purpose, was rejected. This I take to be the Substance of that Account which the Scripture gives us of the Original of Sacrifices. And altho' it's not possible for us to tell what particular View any of those Ancients had of the intended Incarnation of the Son of God, yet it all tended

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to possess Mankind with a very firm Persuasion of this great Myfterious Truth, that there is no poffible Expiation of Sin without Blood, that is, without the Punishment of Sin by the Blood and Death of him, or them, that fhould undertake to make Atonement for it.

3. *Laftly.* Tho' this fhews the Necessity of a Sacrifice of Expiation in order to our Pardon, yet it fhews too at the fame time the Truth of St. Paul's other Observation; *That it is impossible that the Blood of Bulls and of Goats fhould put away Sin.* They were only fo many Types and Figures of that Meritorious Expiation made by the Blood of Jesus: And the Remission of Sins thereby obtain'd, was only a Typical and Figurative Remission, which exempted them from the Curses and Penalties threaten'd by their Law; and made them only fo far Pure and Holy, as concerns a Legal Purity and Levitical Holiness; that is, fuch only as put 'em into a Capacity of entring into the Temple, a Type of Heaven, and of performing fuch Religious and Civil Actions as they were not otherwise admitted to do. But as to a real Remission

The Blood of Beasts insufficient to atone for Sin.
Heb. x: 4:

The Wisdom of God,

sion of Sins before God, and such as might deliver them from Vengeance in the World to come; the Levitical Sacrifices were only Types and Representations of the Blood of Christ, in which alone Satisfaction to the Justice of God is fully and perfectly made.

I have thus given some Account of the true Nature and Necessity of an Atonement. Before I apply it to the Argument now in hand, give me leave, as I propos'd,

V. *Lastly.* To confirm this Account by considering how easily it solves all the Difficulties and Objections that have been made against the Meritorious Expiation of the Death of Christ, and the Necessity thereof to the Remission of Sins. The Sum of all which Scruples and Objections have proceeded, as I shew'd before, from Mens Mistakes about the true Nature, End and Reason for which it was design'd; and I think are easily solv'd and answer'd, when we consider Things aright, and lay no more upon them, than what God intended. As for Example;

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1. The Reason of this Expiation of Sins, and Satisfaction to the Justice of God for them, is not, as our Modern Infidels would foolishly pretend, to be a moving Principle and Incitement to Pity, and Mercy, and Compassion in our God, as tho' he had no Tenderness for us without it, but only such a wise and just Consultation and Regard to his Honour and the Wisdom of his Government in the Pardon of Sin, as may make the Exercise of Mercy to be without any of that Blemish, and those Disadvantages, which I have already shew'd you, inevitably attend an Arbitrary Remission. And in this Distinction, when well and rightly understood, we shall soon see the Weakness and Emptiness of one of those plausible Absurdities, with which the Enemies of Christianity would charge the Doctrin of our Redemption. The Charge is this, That to suppose the offended God to appoint the Mediator by whom he is to be reconcil'd to Sinners, is to shew that he was really reconcil'd to them before, and consequently destroys all the Reason and Necessity of such Mediation. And this with our wise and close-thinking Philosophers goes down for

The Business of Expiation not to incite God's Pity, but to consult his Honour in shewing Mercy.

so just and strong a Conclusion, as to be sufficient to overthrow all serious Regard to the Gospel of our Blessed Lord and Mediator Jesus Christ. When in Truth this boasted Demonstration and infallible Maxim of the *Oracles of Reason*, is but a meer, empty, frivolous Sophism and Fallacy, drawn from a palpable Mistake in the End, and Reason, and Business of Mediation and Satisfaction for Sins before God. The true Purpose and Reason of which is, not from a want of Natural Pity and Compassion in our God, except when thus mov'd by Atonement, but only to make way for such an Exercise of Pity and Mercy as may be for his Honour, and consist with the Authority of his Laws, and evince the Essential Holiness of his Nature. Were God suppos'd to be like some Morose, Sour, Ill-natur'd Father, who, without any Tenderness of Affection toward his offending Children, was forward to Resent, and hard to be pleas'd, as having no great Regard to their Welfare, nor Compassion to their Sufferings, and for this reason would do nothing for them, but what the importunate Intercession of a powerful Mediator

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ator extorted from him; in such a Case this Objection might have some place: It might then be thought inconsistent with such a Character to suppose him to appoint a Mediator, by whose Intercession he determines to make Peace; because then the very Appointment of the Mediator of Reconciliation would speak such a previous Inclination to Pity and Mercy, as would in some measure conclude against the Necessity of it.

But this is not our Case, and consequently such an Objection as this can no way reach, nor affect the Mediation with God by Jesus Christ. The End and Purpose of which is not to move Compassion in him, and to incline his Pity and Mercy to us; for these are Essential to him, and he has continually and naturally a tender Regard to our Welfare and Happiness. But the great End and Reason of this Christian Mediation, is to make way for such an Exercise of Mercy and Compassion towards Sinners, as may be to the Glory of God, and consistent with the universal Rectitude of the Divine Nature, and no Blemish to the Harmony and Consent of his Divine Perfections.

That

That the shewing Mercy to great Offenders might be no Dishonour to his Holiness, nor destroy his Justice and Righteousness, and the Authority of his Laws. This is the Reason, this the Purpose of that Mediation and Satisfaction which the Christian Gospel speaks of. It does not suppose our Heavenly Father to be Cruel, and Morose, and Savage, till he is appeas'd by Blood, and soften'd by Sacrifices; for he is naturally Tender, and Pitiful, and Gracious, and of his Essential Compassion is always inclin'd to shew Mercy to the Miseries of his offending Creatures. But as he is an Holy God, and the Righteous Judge and Governor of the World, the Honour of his Attributes, and the Wisdom of his Government, and the Authority of his Laws are at stake. And he cannot shew Mercy in such a way, as should bring the Reputation of these into Question, or give occasion to the Sons of Men to Blaspheme, and to Reflect unduly and undecently upon any of them. And to prevent the Evils and Mischiefs of this Nature, is doubtless one great End and Reason of that Mediation, that Satisfaction, which the Christian Religion speaks of. And

And tho' it tells us, we own, that God himself appointed this Mediator, and ordain'd his own Eternal Son to make the Satisfaction for our Sins; and in that Appointment and Ordinance discovers great Compassion, and Infinite Mercy, and a Blessed and an Happy Inclination and Disposition to be reconcil'd; yet this is not at all Absurd and Inconsistent with the Necessity of such Mediation and Satisfaction: In that it is neither Absurd, nor Inconsistent for a Person who out of Pity inclines to be Merciful and Gracious to Offenders, to exhibit that Mercy in such a way, and on such Conditions, as may be for his Honour, and vindicate the Character of his Goodness, and the Wisdom of his Conduct. And this is what the Satisfaction for Sins, and the Mediation by Jesus Christ seems chiefly to aim at.

2. The true Reason and Purpose of Mediation and Satisfaction being rightly understood, shews that it is no way inconsistent with the free Grace of God in the gratuitous Remission of Sins. This is another Objection against the Meritorious Expiation and Satisfaction

*Atonement
for Sin not
destructive
of God's
free Grace
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of Christ's Blood, brought by another kind of Adversaries, who plead, That if the *true and full Satisfaction for Sins be once made, the Forgiveness of them then is no longer of Grace and Favour, but of Debt.* Just as a Prisoner fin'd for an Offence, who pays the Sum of Money equivalent to his Transgression, or the Punishment to have been inflicted; when that Obligation is once discharg'd, it is but Justice, and not Kindness to discharge him. And therefore the Necessity of such Expiation and Satisfaction, they think, is wholly disagreeable to what the Gospel frequently declares, as to God's free Pardon of Sins, and the gratuitous Remission of his own generous, undeserv'd Grace and Goodness.

But this also is a false Consequence drawn from a Mistake in the true Reason and Nature of Christ's Satisfaction; which is not of the same Nature with Payment of a Fine, or a Debt: For those once paid, it gives the Debtor a Right to a Discharge, and Exemption from any farther Sufferings to be inflicted; and that too without the imposing on him any new Conditions. But, as I have shewn
you,

you, our Satisfaction is a Vindication of Honour, and Authority, and Holiness, and of the Wisdom of Government and Laws. The former Notion is indeed open to the Objection that they make against it, and must destroy the Freedom of God's Forgiveness; in that if Sins be in every thing as Debts, and Christ's Satisfaction the true Payment of those Debts, it would then make the Pardon not of Grace, but of Debt, and become a just Bar to the imposing any farther Conditions on us. And this is in some measure the Foundation of those Mens Principles about our Covenant of Grace, who suppose Christ to have made such an Atonement and Satisfaction in our new Covenant, as dissolves all the Obligations of the Divine Laws and Commands of Christ, and destroys all the Necessity of our living in Obedience to them. And this is indeed the true Conclusion from esteeming the Atonement and Satisfaction of Christ as a Payment and Discharge of Debts.

But in the true Notion of Satisfaction, as it is only a Vindication of God's Honour and Attributes, the Case is quite otherwise. Here the Pardon is

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Free,

The Wisdom of God,

Free, the Deliverance an Act of Grace, and the Reconciliation Gratuitous. To which God the Father was originally mov'd and inclin'd of his own Essential Goodness, genuine Compassion, and that tender Commiseration, which to the Divine Nature is Inseparable. And in Compensation of our rude Affronts and Injuries, he has not receiv'd either from us, or from our Redeemer, any such Balance, or equivalent Recompence or Advantage, as can make our Salvation a Debt unto us; but only such Expiation of Sin, such Satisfaction to his Justice, as may make the free Exercise of his Grace, in the Remission of it, without Blemish, and without Reproach. I may add,

The Necessity of a Vindictive Justice in God.

3. *Lastly.* That tho' this Account of the Nature and Necessity of a Sacrifice of Atonement establishes a Natural, Essential, Vindictive Justice in God, yet not such a one as favours of Sourness of Temper, or represents him as swelling with Revenge; but only such a one as is not easily to be deny'd, unless we will resolve all the Necessity of punishing Sin into the meer Arbitrary Will and changeable Pleasure of the

the Almighty. And yet perhaps there is no one Thing which the Christian Doctrin of Redemption and Salvation by the Death of Christ, tends more naturally to confute. It does above all Things convince us, that God does nothing in the Salvation and Condemnation of Mankind Arbitrarily, or of his meer Will and Pleasure; but acts all according to the eternal, fixt, establishd Laws of Righteousness and Justice. — Nor is there any other Vindictive Righteousness and Justice here set forth and pleaded for, than what, according to the Principles of common Reason, seems necessary to attest the Essential Holiness of God, which I take to be the Foundation of all his Laws against Sin, and the fundamental Reason of a Future State and a Future Judgment. And this is agreeable to our Natural Notion of the Nature and Necessity of an Atonement. It is what comes in the stead and place of Punishment, so to attest God's Hatred and Abhorrence of Sin, as to make his Mercy in the Pardon of it consistent with his universal Righteousness and Justice; and thereby to keep up in the Minds of Men all lively Apprehensions

The Wisdom of God,

of the Purity and Holiness of his Nature, of the lasting Obligations of his Covenants and Decrees, of the Wisdom of his Government, and the unchangeable Authority of his Laws. And thus I come directly to,

Serm. IV.

*Repentance
alone no
sufficient
Expiation.*

II. The Second great Pretence of the Adversaries of Christianity, *viz.*

That if any Expiation or Atonement for Sin be requir'd, Repentance alone is it, and of itself sufficient to make

our Peace, and to prevail with God to Pardon and Forgive us all Sins. Thus

far they go in expresse Words, *That*

Repentance is the true and only Expiation of Sins; and that bare Repentance is a sufficient Compensation for an infinite Offence committed against an Infinite Being.

If this were true, as it makes all Expiatory Sacrifices Unnecessary and Unreasonable; so it destroys at one Blow

the Necessity of our Redemption by the Death of Christ, and the Wisdom

of God in that Mysterious Dispensation. I am therefore now to lay before

you the Falseness and great Absurdity of this their Boasted, but indeed Er-

roneous and Mischievous Principle; and to let you see, that Repentance,

how-

however Necessary in itself, yet when alone it is not, it cannot reasonably be esteem'd a sufficient Atonement and Compensation for all the Sins that are committed against an Infinite God.

And hereby I must first of all observe, That if what has been said in my last Discourse concerning the Necessity of the Punishment of Sin, and that particularly by the Death of the Mediator, in order to its Expiation be allow'd of; then nothing can be more plain and clear, as the Consequence of that Principle, than that Repentance alone cannot be a sufficient Expiation; in that if Repentance alone were a sufficient Condition of Pardon, without any thing else besides, it would wholly prevent and destroy all that Necessity of Punishment and Vengeance upon which the Necessity of Expiation, as we have already seen, is founded. But I shall endeavour to set all this Matter in a still clearer Light, by these four following Considerations.

I. By shewing how Disagreeable this Principle is to the Thoughts and Sentiments of our Adversaries themselves, and to the Notions and Opinions which they have deliver'd on other Occasions.

II. How Contrary this is to the Receiv'd Opinions and Sentiments of Mankind, as to Offences committed against all Human Laws.

III. How Disagreeable to the Discoveries that God himself has been pleas'd to make us of his sacred Sentiments in this Affair. From all which it will appear,

IV. *Lastly.* That Repentance alone has very little of the true Nature of Expiation and Atonement in it.

*Disallow'd
by our Ad-
versaries
on other
Occasions.*

I. How Disagreeable this Principle is to the Sentiments of our Adversaries themselves, and to the Opinions which they have upon some Occasions thought fit to espouse. For however fondly they embrace this Notion, while they can level it at, and play it against our
Doctrin

Doctrin of Mercy and Salvation by the Mediation and Merits of Christ Jesus, yet I cannot but take notice, that among other bitter and malicious Invectives against the Scripture, one is, that it has spoken of *David* as a *Man after God's own Heart*, who is recorded to have been guilty of Adultery and Murther, altho' it is recorded also with what sorrowful Humiliation he Repented for those Sins. Those evil Practices they think altogether inconsistent with so bright and glorious a Character. But let us here expostulate with them a little the Inconsistency of such a Complaint with their own Notion, That Repentance alone is a sufficient Expiation of Sins committed against God. If such a Character were given him, without any account of his Repentance and Humiliation for his great Offences, they would indeed then have something to object. But this is not, this cannot be pretended; in that his Contrition and Repentance are not only related in that very History, which relates his Miscarriages, but also the Admonition of *Nathan* the Prophet, by which his wounded Conscience was alarm'd, and

and he put in mind how heinously and unreasonably he had offended, and some part of that Devotion with which he humbled himself before God, are recorded for our Example. And if Repentance alone is, as they pretend, a sufficient Expiation of Guilt, why should it not be consistent enough with this Character of a Man, who is recorded to have acted in all his general, habitual Conversation agreeable to the Laws of God in that Dispensation under which he liv'd, save *in the matter of Uriah*, and in that to have shewn a very hearty and affectionate Humiliation.

But, say the profane Adversaries of our Christian Religion, *If you talk of Repentance, this is no more, nor no better than what all Criminals and Villains pretend to, when they are upon the point of Execution as well as he.* I would to God that there were more Truth in that Assertion than there is; I mean, that all Criminals did in good Deed at their dying Hour, approve themselves sincerely Penitent; in that when their Repentance is Sincere and Hearty, it is likely to fare the better with them in another World. But what is this to
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the Cause now before us? Or how is *David* concern'd in this Reflection? Did his Contrition only then shew its self when he was upon the point of Death? Or is there any other just Suspicion, or reasonable Pretence, that it was Hypocritical and Counterfeit? I have not yet observ'd any thing of this kind in all his History. I rather find the contrary; and that altho' he was first call'd to this Humiliation by a particular Message and Admonition of a Divine Prophet, yet when he set himself about it, he acted with all the reasonable and just Discoveries of a Sincere and Hearty Penitent: Nay, he gave the best Evidence of an upright Heart that can be given; that of a Regular, Pious, Virtuous and Devout Conversation all his Days after it.

But our present Business is not so much the Vindication of *David's* Character, as to shew the great Contrariety and Inconsistency of those Mens Principles, who, while they pretend with the Perfection of Philosophical Truths, and the strongest Maxims of certain Reason, to oppose the Fundamental Doctrins of our Redemption, do advance at one time, what at another

ther they reject with the highest Disdain and Scorn. They plead, when they would undervalue the Character and Language of Inspir'd Writers, That Repentance is not sufficient to take off the Blemish and Reproach of two single Transgressions, because great ones, in the Life of a Man, and a Prince otherwise exemplarily Religious and Good in all his Actions. And yet when the Reasons of a Mediator, and an Expiatory Sacrifice are to be call'd in question by them, then that very Repentance, which before could not wipe off the Stain of two single Sins among Men, shall now be pleaded sufficient in itself alone to satisfy the Vengeance of a Righteous Almighty God for all the vilest, numberless, horrible Iniquities of the Boldest, and most Obstinate, Profane, Deliberate Transgressors. Strange, Inconsistent, Unintelligible, Ambiguous Oracles! That at once make the same Repentance a meritorious Expiation and Atonement before God for all the Sins of the whole World, and yet not enough to vindicate the good Character of a Penitent among Men for two particular Transgressions. What is this

this but to shew, that Mens Exceptions to Christianity are from the strength of Prejudice, and not of Reason; and that the conceited Maxims of pretended Philosophy and Truth, are oftentimes the most dangerous Principles of Error and Delusion? What is it but the very Strength of Error and Delusion, to defend those Principles at one time, which they disdain and scorn at another? What is it but a gross and scandalous Imposition, to pretend that sufficient to satisfy the justest Vengeance of an angry God, which yet they will not allow enough to vindicate the Character of a Religious and Holy Man? No, not even the Principles of our Adversaries themselves, when taken in another View, from that which they perversely and maliciously design against the Doctrin of our Redemption, will admit us to believe, that they themselves are indeed and sincerely of that Opinion. Let me confirm this by considering,

II. How Contrary it is to the Receiv'd Opinion and Sentiments of Mankind, as to Offences committed against all Human Laws. And I hope that

Not allowed in Offences against Human Laws.

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the Honour of our Holy God, and the Wisdom of his Government, and the Reason and Authority of his Divine and Sacred Laws, when violated by the Follies and Iniquities of Men, are not to be appeas'd, and vindicated, and satisfy'd at a lower Price, and by a cheaper Atonement than the Offences committed against the Authority of Human Governments. Bring this Principle then before the Judges of the Land, and try if it will be admitted as of sufficient Force to remove the Guilt of all Transgressions and Iniquities committed against the Laws of Men. If it will, then by a clear Consequence it would be unreasonable, that any Criminal should be Punish'd, if it could be prov'd that he heartily Repented for the Evils he had done. We all agree, that Repentance is a necessary and indispensable Condition of our Pardon. But if it were allow'd to be the only necessary Condition of Pardon, and sufficient of itself to wipe away the Guilt, Pollution and Stain of Sin, what would be the Consequence of such a Principle? Suppose that a Man should Murther his Father, Ravish his Mother, Prostitute his Sister, and Undoe
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his Brother, become a publick Plague to Men, and Blaspheme his God, would his Repentance after all, make it unreasonable and unjust to Punish him? It must needs make it so, if there be any Truth in this Doctrin, That Repentance alone is a sufficient Expiation and Atonement for Sin. For when the Sin of a Penitent is once thus truly and fully Expiated, his Guilt is thereby so far taken away, that there is no longer any Necessity for Punishment, but the Pardon of the Expiated Sin becomes both Just and Reasonable.

And what fine Work would this Notion soon make in all Countries and Courts of Judicature, if it was once receiv'd, and this natural and necessary Consequence from it observ'd? It would entitle every Offender that could give sufficient Evidence of his sincere Contrition to a Pardon, and thereby either defeat all Human Laws and Penalties in such Cases, or else make the Execution of them Injustice, Cruelty and Barbarity.

And how will Men be answerable for the Result of such Doctrins, or how will they avoid these mischievous
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Consequences of them? How will they reconcile the Sufficiency of Repentance to expiate Sin before God, with the Justice of punishing penitent Criminals among Men? For, according to their Notion, after Repentance all the just Reason and Necessity of Punishment, and all the Obligations to it ceases. If their Conversion takes not away their Guilt, it cannot Expiate; and if it does, why should the Guiltless be put to Death? If they say, that the Sincerity of their Repentance cannot be known, and therefore must not be taken notice of, for fear they should dissemble, and after their Discharge return to their Iniquities again, I could have several Things to answer. But I insist only on this, That the very Appearance of a true Contrition would, according to their Notion, scarce leave the Punishment of the Sinner to be Justify'd. For why should a Man that has all the fair Appearance of having satisfy'd for his Offence, and fully expiated the Guilt of it, be put to Death? And especially, if as Men commonly think, it's better that ten guilty Men should be Pardon'd, than one innocent Man Die? And yet every Penitent, visibly

visibly sincere, has somewhat like the Appearance of an innocent Man, if Repentance alone be a sufficient Propitiation.

What Reason then can be given, or to what End is it fit, that a relenting Offender should suffer the Penalty of Death from Men? I know our Adversaries must at last come to this, That however their Contrition and Tears may avail with God in another World, when Sin is no longer to be prevented, yet in this World Punishments are necessary to the Terror of evil Doers, and consequently to the Good of Mankind, to keep up the Authority of Human Laws, and thereby to the Preservation of our selves by the Prevention of Sinners. I allow these to be very good Reasons; but then I pray, can we suppose that God has not his Ends of Government to serve, as well as we ours? And those too of as great Importance? Are not the Manifestation of the Holiness of his Nature, and of his Justice in the Distribution of Rewards and Punishments, and of the Reasons, and of the Authority of his Laws such Motives to the Punishment of Sin, as are eternally to be regarded,

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ed, and will have place at the last Judgment of the World, even when the Prevention of Sin will be too late? Let our wise Philosophers then account for these Things, and make it evident if they can, how Repentance alone, which cannot so satisfy the Justice and violated Authority of Human Laws, as to exempt the Criminals universally from those Punishments, should yet be thought sufficient to appease the Justice of an offended God, and satisfy the Ends, Reasons and Authority of his most wise and sacred Precepts and Commands. But farther yet,

The severe Execution of God's first Law declares against it.

III. See the Sentiments of Almighty God as to this Matter. For had there been any such Sufficiency in Repentance alone to atone for Sin, why should not its Influence be seen as well in Expiating the Sin of *Adam*, as of any of his Posterity? And thereby avail as effectually to the preventing of Death both in him and all his Posterity, as in delivering us from it? There was nothing, that I know of, so peculiarly and extraordinarily black in the Sin of *Adam* above many of those that are

are committed by other Men, but that the same Expiation which is sufficient to atone for the Sins of the whole World besides, might and would no doubt have been satisfactory for his Sin also. As then, it cannot, I think, be disputed, but that *Adam* did Repent of that his first Transgression by which Death entred into the World; so if Repentance alone were sufficient to make such an Expiation, why should it not shew its *Infinite* Force in preventing the Punishment threaten'd, as well as in delivering us from it? For the Reason seems to me the same in both. Why should it not as reasonably avail to the preventing our Dying at all? For when the Guilt of Sin is so sufficiently expiated, and the Reasons of the Law, and the Authority of the Law-giver so answer'd by Repentance, as that there is no farther Necessity of the Execution of that Law; why should the Punishment any longer be inflicted? What Reason then can these wise Men give us, why God has, and does still inflict Death upon repenting Sinners? The only Account that I am able to give of it is this, That He hereby intended to signifie to us, that

Repentance alone is not a sufficient Satisfaction to the violated Authority of his Laws, but that the just Vindication of his Honour and Holiness does also require the Punishment of Sin, according to the Tenor of his Covenants. It was intended, by the Almighty, to be a Token of his just Displeasure and Wrath, of his Detestation and Abhorrence of Evil, and of the venerable Authority of all those Laws by which he at any time thinks fit to forbid it. By this it is that he shews us, that penitential Tears are not, cannot be a sufficient Expiation. That the Laws of a Righteous, Holy, Tremendous God are not to be violated, and his injur'd Divine Majesty to be appeas'd at so cheap a Rate; but that, whenever we offend him, the Punishment denounc'd must inevitably be inflicted. His Honour, and his Wisdom, and the universal Rectitude of his Nature, and the Authority of his Laws, and the Reasons of his Government require all this; and Sorrow, and Tears and penitential Contrition alone will not relieve us. And therefore, if we hope for Mercy and Compassion, as he is indeed Compassionate to our

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Sufferings, yet that must be administered to us, not Arbitrarily and of meer Dominion, nor for our Relenting and Mourning alone that we have expos'd our selves to Misery, but on some such more important Considerations and Conditions, and in some such more extraordinary way as may carry more remarkable and convincing Demonstrations of God's Abhorrence of, and great Indignation against all Iniquity.

And this may serve in general by the way to instruct us how it comes to pass after so complete and perfect an Expiation and Atonement as Christ Jesus has made for us, that we are not yet allow'd to be exempted from Death, but must as inevitably Die, as tho' we had never been Redeem'd: The Reason of which is, That no true Satisfaction can be indeed made to the Vengeance of our offended God, for the Transgressions of the first Covenant, but by first suffering the Penalties threaten'd by it; which, if Repentance alone could have Expiated, had not been Necessary. And much less then can we now believe, that Repentance alone should Expiate all the Voluntary,

Deliberate, Repeated and Malicious Transgressions of Men obstinately and profanely Wicked, only because they profess themselves sorrowful and contrite at last. No, if the Violation of the first Covenant requir'd a Mediator, and an Atonement and Satisfaction to Divine Justice to Expiate that first Transgression of *Adam*, and to deliver us from the Curse that his single Disobedience has brought upon us, the obstinate Iniquities of most other Men do much more require it. And when God yet thought not fit absolutely to Pardon such a Transgression as *Adam's* was, nor to suffer the Repentance of the Offender to expiate the Sin, and to prevent the Punishment, but inflicted it on him and on all his Posterity, even on those who never actually offended, how little have any obstinate malicious Offenders to hope for from their deepest Humiliation alone without a Mediator? Or what is the Construction to be truly and properly made of God's dealing thus with us all, but only from thence to conclude, That in the Judgment and Sentiments of God himself, Repentance alone is no sufficient Expiation for Sin? But that

that the Justice of God, and the Honour of his Attributes, and the Wisdom of his Government do require something more than this as a satisfactory Reason and Motive to the Pardon and Remission of it. In a word, there is, I think, so much just Force in this Conclusion, that if Repentance alone were to be allow'd as a sufficient Compensation for the Violation of God's Commands and Laws, I do not see how the present Mortality of Mankind can be accounted for; nor how it is consistent with his Justice and Mercy to subject us all to the Power of Death for the Offence of our first Parents, who, as we have great Reason to believe, liv'd to repent of that their Iniquity.

Let it not be here said again, that Death is Natural, and as some vainly pretend, that we had Died altho' Man had never Sinned: . For I have shewn above, that however Mortal we are by Nature, yet when God is pleas'd to enter into Covenant with us, and by that Covenant to make Death the Punishment of Sin, in that very Clause is included a Tacit, but Evident Stipulation, that Immortality should have
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been the certain Recompence of Obedience. And to make Death the Punishment of Sin, and to inflict that Punishment even upon a repenting Sinner, is undeniably to declare in favour of what I am now pleading for, *viz.* That Repentance alone is not enough to satisfy the Justice of God for the Violation of his Laws. If we poor Earthly Creatures, who ought never to forget the immense Distance between the Almighty God and us, and for that reason alway to judge Modestly, and not Dogmatically of his Providences; if we, I say, not forgetting our Distance and Modesty, may yet be allow'd to judge the Reason of his Dispensations from the plain and evident Tendency of them, we have reason to look upon God's bringing Death upon all Men for the Sin of *Adam*, notwithstanding his and our Repentance, to be intended by him as a most evident Attestation of his Divine Opinion and Judgment in this Matter, *viz.* That Repentance for Sin is alone not sufficient to satisfy his Justice and Vengeance, and to procure the Remission of it without some farther Expiation and Atonement. But,

IV. *Lastly.*

IV. *Lastly.* Repentance alone is so far from being a sufficient Expiation, that indeed it has but very little of the true Nature of Expiation in it. It is neither sufficient to satisfy the Justice of God, nor does it restore us to that Perfection of Original Righteousness from which we fell. And both these I have shew'd you are necessary to the Recovery of our lost Felicity and Immortality.

1. It is not sufficient to satisfy the Justice of an offended God. 'Tis not enough to save his Honour, nor to answer the Reason and Authority of his Laws. The Nature and Necessity of Atonement arising wholly from the Obligation that the Sinner is under to Punishment, and from the Necessity of God's doing something that may attest the Reality of his Displeasure and Wrath, as the only convincing Testimony of his Essential Holiness, do so undeniably suppose, as I shew'd above, the certain and severe Punishment of Sin; that there is nothing whereby God can sufficiently attest his Declaration and Abhorrence of Iniquity after it is once committed, but by

It destroys that Necessity of Punishment upon which all Atonement is founded.

by a Severity of Punishment to be inflicted either upon the Sinner, or some other in his stead; and consequently, no effectual Way to make Men and Angels truly sensible of his Absolute and Essential Holiness, but by some such Satisfaction to his vindictive Justice, as alway includes Punishment.

How then is it possible that Repentance alone can be a sufficient Expiation, which especially in their Notion is directly intended to prevent and to destroy all the Necessity of Punishment? If it were sufficient effectually to Expiate all Sins, it would be sufficient also effectually to prevent all Punishments. What one Principle or Notion then can be more absolutely Inconsistent and Absurd than this, which at once both supposes and destroys the Necessity of punishing Sinners? The Necessity of Expiation supposes and proves the Necessity of Punishment, in that if the Divine Sanction and Execution of the Law were righteously and reasonably to be revers'd and superseded, no Expiation would be wanting, but our Salvation would be as Righteous and Reasonable without it.

And

And yet, if Repentance alone were a sufficient Expiation, the Punishment of Sin could not be Necessary, because the effectual Atoning for it by true Repentance would wholly remove and prevent that Necessity. What then can be more Palpable and Gross, than a Principle that directly undermines the very Foundation on which it ought to stand? It affects in these Men's Mouths to be call'd by the Name of Expiation; and yet, as intended by them, it destroys the Whole of that very Thing which in that Name is primarily, and chiefly, and indispensably imply'd.

How very different is this from our Christian Atonement? Which does not represent the Divine Justice otherwise satisfy'd and pleas'd, than by a severe Punishment of Sin in so extraordinary and wonderful a manner, as will abundantly evince both to Men and Angels the Greatness of God's Displeasure, and the Severity of his Resentments. Whereas these Men wholly supersede all the Necessity and Obligations to this; and if Men be but heartily Afflicted, and Contrite, and Humble, and Sincere in their A-
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ment, God has no more to expect from them, but must rest sufficiently satisfy'd with this, be their Offences never so many, and the Aggravations of them never so provoking. By this alone, in our Adversaries present Opinion, all the Obligation to Punishment is vacated, and the Necessity of it ceas'd, because Repentance alone is a sufficient Satisfaction to the Infinite Almighty God for an infinite Number of the most heinous Provocations that can be committed against him.

This Opinion would be more tolerable than it is, if the former Conceit of an Arbitrarious Remission by a meer Sovereign Dominion and Right could reasonably have place: For where there is no other Reason of, or Obligation to Punishment, but by the meer Arbitrary Will of the Supreme, there Repentance may be enough; because he that acts only by his own Will, may chuse whether he will exact any thing more, or no. And indeed these two loose Principles are so nearly allied, and have such a close and mutual Relation to each other, that they are fit to be maintain'd only by the same

same Persons. They mutually support each other; but take away the one, and the other has but little Strength and Force alone.

I need not then go farther to shew the great Vanity and Unreasonableness of such a Principle, than to shew you how this also, as well as the former, is inconsistent with the Essential Vindictive Justice of God, and destroys all necessary Regard to his Honour and his absolute Perfections. How shall Men and Angels, who will both of them judge of God, by the visible Fruits of his Providences and Government, how shall they be made sensible of his Essential Holiness, and that his Laws are founded on the Principles of Essential and Eternal Righteousness, and that he hates Sin with a real and a perfect Hatred, if they were to see all the Solemnity of his wise Laws, and sacred Covenant, truckle out of meer Pity to a relenting Sinner? And all these Eternal Reasons and Obligations of his Laws to be at once given up, upon such a single Consideration, which however Becoming and Necessary, is not yet Sufficient, in the common sense of Mankind, to Expiate

ate the Guilt of a vile Transgression of the less sacred Laws and Ordinances of Men? These Things, I say again, might be allow'd, if all was resolv'd into the meer Arbitrary Will of the Lawgiver, without any necessary Obligation in Justice to the Punishment of Sin. But where God appears to deal with us upon the Establisht and Eternal Principles of Justice and Righteousness, and by such Laws and Covenants as are founded on those Principles; there, I think, it is impossible that Repentance alone should be allow'd a sufficient Expiation. This is what I think, that neither the Honour of God, nor the Authority of his Laws can admit.

And especially when God Almighty has by a well attested Revelation not only declar'd somewhat more than this necessary, and contriv'd a Way for us, which he proclaims to be more suitable to his Divine Perfections, it is the height of Insolence and Vanity, as well as of Impiety, to pretend our weak and trifling Reasons against it. Especially yet, if you will but allow, what I have often mention'd, because I think it is never to be deny'd, *viz.* That

That the Punishment of Sin is the only Evidence in Nature to attest the Reality of God's Holiness and Hatred of it, when it is once committed ; which will not only convince us, that his vindictive Justice is an Essential Attribute, but also that the severer the Conditions of our Pardon are, and the greater Evidence God gives in it of his just Displeasure and wrathful Indignation, the more he consults the Honour of his Holiness, and the more he keeps up the sacred Obligation, and guards the Authority of his solemn Establishments and Covenants. And according to these, I think, very plain and certain Principles, I dare appeal to all the sensible part even of our Adversaries, whether our Gospel Redemption by the Mediation and Atonement of Jesus Christ, does not much better answer all these Reasons, and much better serve all these great and glorious Purposes, than that Repentance alone, which in the common Sentiments of Mankind, is not enough to Expiate the Transgression of Human Sanctions, nor allow'd sufficient to prevent the Execution of them. But I must go one Step farther yet. For,

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2. As Repentance alone is not sufficiently satisfactory to the vindictive Justice of God, for that very Reason it alone cannot restore us to that Original State and Perfection of Righteousness from which we by Transgression fell. I have already observ'd above, that the Salvation of Mankind does not only require a Mediator to deliver us from the Misery due to our Sins, but also to restore us to our lost state of Righteousness and Holiness, in order to our Felicity and Immortality; the Authority of the Law still remaining good, that no Man in a state of Sin shall be admitted into the Presence and Kingdom of God. And that nothing less than what is completely Holy and Perfect in Obedience, can inherit complete Felicity and Eternal Life. Now how can Repentance alone do all this? Mourning for Sins is not fulfilling the Law, but lamenting that we have not fulfill'd it. 'Tis bewailing our Guilt, in which Contrition we acknowledge our selves Sinners, and cannot stand upon our Innocence. In short, it declares us to be Criminals still, tho' more Humble and Contrite than we were before; and shews plainly,

ly, that whatever Change may be made for the better, as to the inward Temper of our Mind, and Heart and Desires, yet we are still in a state of Sin, we are under the Guilt of it, and tainted with the Corruption of it, and certain for the time to come to commit it in one Kind or other. We are still, I say, in such a State, as God by a solemn Establishment has made an Eternal Bar to our Entrance into Cœlestial Felicity: And therefore, until we can so far recover our selves from the Power, as well as from the Guilt of it, that we shall offend no more, but be re-instated in our Original Capacity of perfect Holiness and Obedience, we are not, according to the first Ordinance and Covenant of God, fit for the Glories of his Kingdom. And we all know how the strictest and best Repentance comes infinitely short of this. If therefore that Clause of the first Covenant be still so in force, as I think I prov'd that it is, that nothing in a state of Sin can be admitted to Immortality, every Body alive may easily perceive that Repentance alone can never be sufficient to the Recovery of our lost Felicity. Either the

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first Covenant must be dispens'd with, and superseded, or the Transgression of it expiated by some better Atonement than Repentance alone can make. 'Tis true, Repentance is the best Thing that we can do, and All that is in our Power: But still, if this our All be too little to satisfy the Vengeance of our offended God, to vindicate the Honour of his Attributes, the Holiness and Justice of his Government, and to answer the Ends and Purposes of his Sacred and Eternal Laws, it shews only our Misery, not our Consolation in that alone: We are still Sinners, altho' relenting ones. And as Repentance alone can never wash away our Guilt, so a state of Sin and Immortality in Happiness can never stand together. There is then, we see, no Remedy for us, but that as by our Sins we fall under the Displeasure and Wrath of God, and become obnoxious to his Righteous Vengeance to suffer such Torments as his Divine Justice shall think proper to inflict; so if left to our selves in that Misery, we must continue thus *Vessels of Wrath, and fitted to Destruction*, never, never capable of regaining our lost

lost Felicity and Glory, till that Gracious God of Truth and Righteousness, who alone best knows how to reconcile his Attributes, and to exhibit Mercy in such a way as shall be no Blemish to his Justice, shall find out a Saviour to atone for, and a Redeemer to restore us. This is what our Christian Gospel tells us he has done by his own Blessed Son our Lord Jesus Christ. And how much wiser and better a Method that is, and how more to the Glory of God, the Honour of his Goodness, Justice and Holiness, and more agreeable to the Reasons of the first Covenant, and the Authority of all his Laws, is the next Thing that we are to speak to. This is the,

II. Second Thing I propos'd. But before I enter directly upon this, I would beg leave to take a fuller and completer View of the miserable State of Mankind by Sin, and of the Vengeance and Misery that we wanted to be deliver'd from. What has been hitherto said, has been with so peculiar a Regard to the first Covenant made with Mankind in *Adam*, and our universal Fall under the Curse and

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Sentence of Death by him, that the Personal Iniquities of the rest of Mankind have not yet been sufficiently taken into Consideration. Tho' *Adam's* Sin made all Mankind Mortal, and brought us all under the power of Death, yet that was not the only Calamity that we wanted to be deliver'd from. I am therefore now to add, that besides and over and above all that, there is a farther Reason, and a fresh Occasion for, and a new Necessity of Atonement and Expiation, to deliver us from the Vengeance due to all our own actual Sins, and from the Punishments to which we are all inevitably expos'd by them. For altho' we were not each of us originally under any particular Stipulation and Personal Covenant as to our own Personal Actions, by the Terms of which, such, or such a particular Punishment became due unto us for our Sins, yet we were, and in a state of Nature we are all so far under the general Reasons and Obligations of that first Ordinance and Decree, that as Sinners we must be Miserable. And as by our own Personal, Obstinate and Deliberate Offences we are greater Sinners

ners than *Adam* was, so consequently we must by those our greater Sins, become obnoxious to some farther Additional, Personal Vengeance, to some greater and severer Punishment, than that Death alone which the Sin of *Adam* has brought upon us. And what that is we are now to consider. For the clearing of which Point let it be observ'd,

First, That our Redemption, as set forth in Holy Scripture, has respect to the Sins of all Mankind, as well as to the Sin of *Adam*. He died for all, in that all had sinned. And for this Reason, when the Apostles speak of our Redemption and Salvation by the Blood of Christ, they speak in such a manner as includes the whole Race of Mankind wanting such an Expiation and Atonement by reason of our Sins. He came to save us from our Sins. And therefore in him we have Redemption thro' his Blood, even the Remission of our Sins. And when we were Enemies by wicked Works, which all Sinners are, God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them: So that he is now become the Propitiation for our Sins; and not for

Christ the Redeemer of all Men.

2 Cor. v. 15. Rom. v.

Mat. i.

Eph. i. 7.

Rom. v. 16.

1 Joh. ii. 2.

2 Cor. v.
14.

ours only, but for the Sins of the whole World. Now if Christ thus died for all, then were all dead, as St. Paul argues on a like Occasion. Dead, not by Adam's Sin alone, but in and by those their own Sins, for which he Died. And this Death must be understood Figuratively, and be intended to denote some such Misery and Torment in a state of Death, as each Man's own Personal Offences had made him obnoxious to. 'Tis in regard to this alone, that he can properly be said to have died for all Men, and to have been the Propitiation for all our Sins. It must be on the account of some such Misery as we were in danger of, by reason of our Sins, and must have suffer'd, had we not been so redeem'd. And therefore from this Consideration we conclude and observe,

Secondly, That besides the Death that Adam's Sin has brought upon us all, there was some farther Punishment originally intended and reserv'd for Sinners, on the score of their own Personal Transgressions and Offences, had we not been thus redeem'd by the Blood of Jesus Christ.——This, methinks, is undeniably plain and certain.

1. From

1. From the very Scripture Phrase and Expression. The Words *Deliverances, Redemption* and *Salvation*, in the common Language of all Mankind suppose, that the Persons were obnoxious to, and must have suffer'd, had they not been so redeem'd, somewhat of that Misery and Torments which they are now deliver'd from. Without this, the Expressions are improper, and not significant of the true Advantages and Kindness exhibited to Mankind in Jesus Christ. But why should I insist on Words alone? When,

Redemption supposes Misery to have been our Portion without it.

2. This is a Principle agreeable to common Reason also. If there be such a thing in God as Essential Justice, and Vindictive Righteousness, founded in the Perfections of his Nature, and necessary to vindicate the Honour and Authority of his Laws, then to be sure the greatest Transgressions will alway have the severest Punishment, and with the greatest Difficulty be pardon'd. — Consequently then, if one single Transgression of our first Parents, and that too committed rather thro' the crafty Delusions of the Tempter, than with a Spirit of deliberate Malice, so incens'd

the Displeasure of our God as to destroy the Felicity which they had till then enjoy'd, and to bring Death on all their Posterity, even on those that never actually offended, we may depend upon it, that the multiply'd Iniquities, the deliberate, obstinate Vices of an infinite Number of profane, irreclaimable, wicked Men, call'd for severer Punishment, and smarter Torment. And as they did, so also that the Righteous Vengeance of an Holy God had made due Provision for it. And from this Misery, more than from a state of Death and Insensibility alone, we wanted to be redeem'd. This seems so very plain and rational, as well as agreeable to the Scripture Phrase and Expression, that it cannot readily be disputed. The only difficult and important Question to be ask'd is, *What, and Where* the Misery of sinful Man must have been without a Saviour.—To which I answer,

That Misery must have been in a state of Death.

3. *Lastly.* That the State of Death seems to have been that State by the Divine Providence of God allotted and appointed for Recompence to wicked and ungodly Men Unredeem'd. For however the State of Death is now so sweet-

sweeten'd and sanctify'd by Jesus Christ, that all who *die in the Lord* may justly be allow'd, and reasonably be believ'd not to be Miserable, but to abide in *Paradise*, a place of Felicity and Joy, with our Lord, yet in its Original Appointment, a state of Death was so certainly intended to be a state of Vengeance and Retribution to Sinners, that St. John calls the future Torments of the Damned *in the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone by the Name of the Second Death*. It had Allusion, and was accommodated, no doubt, to the full extensive Import of Death it self, that first Death, I mean, which the Sin of *Adam* has brought upon us all; which, according to the *Hebrew* Language, in which Living and Dying signifie Happiness and Misery, seems not intended so much to denote an entire Dissolution of the whole Man, as that Dissolution of the Body, and Separation of the Soul from it, by which the Soul passes into a state of Recompence and Retribution for its Sins; into the place in *Hebrew* call'd *גֵּהֶנֶם*, *Luk. viii. 31.* in *Greek* *αἶθρῶς*. The former denoting the deep and immense Caverns of the Earth, is often rendred the *Pit*, the

the *Grave* and *Hell*, as it was by the Ancients taken for the general Receptacle of the Dead. The other is particularly mention'd as the place of Torments in which Infernal Spirits are reserv'd unto the Judgment of the last great Day. But what need we more? If it be allow'd that the Righteous God had made Provision for Vengeance, and the Punishment of Sinners in a state of Sin and Wrath without a Saviour, it must be in a state of Death, and can be no where else. As to the Resurrection from the Dead, it is so wholly ascrib'd to Jesus Christ, and to his Conquest over Death and Hell, that if Christ had never become our Saviour, there could have been no Resurrection from the Dead. And therefore all the Misery or Torments that Mankind unredeem'd could have suffer'd for their Sins after this Life, and without a Resurrection, must have been in a state of Death.

Nor is this at all disagreeable to the Sentence at first denounc'd against Man's Disobedience, *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* Which, as it was not a Personal Covenant made with *Adam* alone, and a

Sen-

Sentence to be immediately inflicted on him, but a Covenant of Human Nature, and a Sentence of Mortality, that our whole Generation fall under by his Offence, so by the Severity of his Sentence Almighty God has not only attested to the World his Vengeance and Displeasure against Sin in general, but also at the same time made Provision for the future Punishment of every Man's Personal Offences in that state of Death, that more proper Time and Place ordain'd for Vengeance and Punishment to Sinners.

Our present Life is on all hands confess'd to be chiefly a state of Trial or Probation, and all the Miseries of it rather in the way of Discipline and Government, than of an exact Recompence and Compensation. If therefore God made any Provision for the Punishment and Recompence of Sinners unredeem'd, the future state of Death must be the Time and Place originally intended for it. I know very well, that some think it sufficient in this Case to say, that by Jesus Christ and his Redemption, we shall at the last Judgment after the Resurrection be deliver'd on the Conditions of Faith

Faith and Repentance, from the Torments of Hell and Damnation, which were due to our Iniquities. I grant it, and I earnestly desire to Bless and Praise the Infinite Mercies of our Gracious God, thro' the Merits and Mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, in which, and in whom alone we have this Hope. But then at the same time I must beg leave to ask, whether Mankind had been in danger of, and could, and would, and must have suffer'd any such Punishment and Misery by their Sins, if there had been no Saviour, no Redemption given? If they had, then indeed here is the greatest reason of Joy, and Thanksgiving, and Praise imaginable. This is a Deliverance of wonderful Condescension, and Mercy, and Compassion, and Grace: Such a Redemption as is worthy of God, and of that mysterious Method by which he has accomplish'd it, and of all those kind and tender Expressions of Love and Pity, by which the Gospel represents it to us. But if Mankind could not have suffer'd any such like Torments, but by his Saviour, as it's plain that in these Mens Sense they could not, because without him there was

no Possibility of either Resurrection, or Judgment, or Future State, then I must beg leave to alter my whole Thoughts and Sentiments of this Matter; and freely to declare, that thus understood, the words *Deliverance*, *Redemption* and *Salvation*, cannot belong to it. It looks rather like Prevaricating with Mankind, than to treat us with Candor and Integrity, to tell us that we are *fav'd from our Sins*, and deliver'd by Christ from the Misery due unto 'em, and the Torments and Damnation to which they had expos'd us, when at the same time, according to these Mens Principles, we could not possibly have been obnoxious to, nor have suffer'd any such Torments by 'em, if such Redemption had never been wrought, and such a Saviour had never been given. If this, I say, be the Case of Mankind in Christ's Dying for us, *Redemption*, *Salvation* and *Deliverance* are Words improperly us'd on that Occasion; in that if this be indeed our Case, we are so far from being deliver'd from the Punishment of our Sins by Jesus Christ, especially if we speak of Human Nature in general, that instead of this, by him, and

and by him alone are we brought to such Vengeance, and Punishment, and Torment for our Sins, as if he had never come, we could never have suffer'd, but must eternally have escap'd.

Let those then look to it, who advance such Notions of Death, and of the Condition of Mankind in a state of Sin and Death, as the Scripture Expressions and Notions concerning our Salvation by Jesus Christ can in no wise consist with. For if it be indeed *Redemption, Salvation and Deliverance* from our Sins, from the Guilt and the Punishment of 'em, that we obtain by Jesus Christ, those very Words alone suppose and prove that there was a state of Vengeance, and Misery, and Punishment, and Torments prepar'd for Sinners antecedently to either our Resurrection or Redemption; and that must be in a state of Death.

Heb. ii.
14.

It's thus I understand St. Paul, when he tells us, that Christ took our Nature and Died for us, *That thro' Death he might destroy him that had the power of Death, (i. e.) the Devil; that is, him who had Power and Authority*

over

over the Dead, to Torment, and Afflict, and Punish 'em for their Sins. Thus also he tells us again, that Jesus *has deliver'd us from the wrath to come.* 1 Theff. i. 10.

That Expression plainly supposes Vengeance and Wrath to have been the Portion of Sinners without a Saviour: And that *Wrath to come*, which is the distinguishing Character of Misery in another World, and of such Misery as we must have suffer'd in that other World, without a Saviour, must, I think, be undeniably in a state of Death. There being no other Misery that Mankind could have suffer'd after this Life, and antecedent to the Resurrection, which as it's obtain'd by Jesus Christ alone, could never have belong'd to any of us, had we never been Redeem'd.—In short, the words *Mercy*, and *Goodness*, and *Pity*, and *Compassion* to Sinners, necessarily suppose Misery belonging to those Sinners, to whom that Pity is extended. And as a Covenant of Grace certainly has its Denomination from the Principle that it proceeds from, and the Benefits that are tender'd by it, so indeed the Declarations which the New Testament almost every where makes of the
Love

Love and Goodness of God to Mankind, in giving up his Son Christ Jesus to die for our Redemption, are very solemn and wonderfully Great. And as God never extols his Acts of Mercy and Grace without Reason, and beyond the just Merit of 'em, so we must from thence conclude, that there was a Reason and a Necessity for all this, suitable to the Greatness of the Undertaking. In all which, the Love of God to Mankind will always be consider'd, and rise or fall in our Esteem, not only in proportion to the Blessings and Benefits that we are intitled to thereby, but also to the Greatness and Inevitableness of that Misery, which otherwise must have been our Portion. Now, tho' it must be acknowledg'd, that as Death is the Punishment of Sin, it is a Blessing, and an Act of Grace, to deliver our Mortal Nature from it, and to restore us to the Hope of Immortality again, yet the Blessing is much enhans'd, when we come to reflect, that even in the Death we are deliver'd from, we had not been in a state of Indolency and Exemption from all Misery, but must have languish'd in the everlasting

ing and continual Sense of God's severe Displeasure and Wrath; and in degrees of Misery and Torment proportionable to the Greatness of our Sins.

This then is the State to which the Gospel Notion of *Redemption and Salvation from our Sins* does most peculiarly and properly belong, and that best suits the solemn Declarations that are therein made of Deliverance, Mercy, Pity, Compassion and Reconciliation. A Deliverance it is, not from Death alone, but also from those Miseries and Torments in it, which as they are ten thousand times worse than a meer Dissolution or Annihilation, so it deserves best on that account to be call'd by the name of *Salvation*.

If these Observations are just, and these Reasonings true, as I cannot but persuade myself they are, then methinks there needs to be no more Disputes about the distinct Existence of the Souls of Mankind in a state of Separation; in that the very Doctrine of our Redemption, if thus understood, supposes it. And to talk that a Dead Man is no way capable either of Joy or Torment, must needs be either

The Immortality of the Soul suppos'd in the Doctrine of our Redemption.

an Equivocation, or a great Mistake; and as inconsistent with the true Notion and Scripture Account of our Redemption, as with the common Sentiments and establish'd Opinion of Mankind about the Soul. A state of Death has been universally look'd on, as a state of Retribution for our Actions, and of Punishment for our Sins. I have not said thus much on this Subject meerly to vindicate a Cause that I may be thought too fond of, I mean the Soul's Natural Immortality; but because I am verily perswaded that the true Reason, and the great Want and Necessity of our Redemption arises from, and depends very much on a tender Regard to the Misery and Torments that Mankind must have suffer'd in a state of Death, had we not been so Redeem'd. To suppose that there had been no such future state of Punishment and Vengeance, had not Christ by a Resurrection provided one, seems to me, I must own, a great Blemish to the Wisdom, and a Defect in the Righteousness of God. It is to suppose him to have made no effectual Provision for the Punishment of Sin in a state of Sin: Nay, to have made that

that Provision for Vengeance and Mi-
fery in, and by a Covenant of Grace,
which a state of Sin much rather want-
ed, and seems more peculiarly to call
for and require, and which Redemp-
tion was therefore intended to deliver
us from. In a Word, it is to suppose,
that if Mankind had never been Re-
deem'd, we could never have suffer'd
effectually for our Sins; but by the
Benefit of a total and final Dissoluti-
on all the Personal Iniquities and most
enormous Vices of Mankind must have
gon unpunish'd, and enjoy'd a perpe-
tual and everlasting Impunity. And
as such Principles do by no means a-
gree with the Scripture Account of
our Salvation, so do they as little also
with our Natural Notions of that Es-
sential Holiness and Vindictive Justice
of God, which I have already shewn
to be necessary and essential Attri-
butes, the true Foundation of all
God's Legislature, and of all his
Vengeance against Sinners. From
this Account then of the miserable
Condition of Mankind in a state of Sin,
proceed we now,

*The Gospel
account of
our Salva-
tion consi-
dered.*

To consider what the Atonement of this Guilt, and the saving us from this Misery in its full extent, seems necessarily to require; and also, how excellently and admirably well the several Actions and Sufferings of Jesus Christ answer to the Ends and Reasons of all that could be expected in such a Case. And here we see already that there are two Things to be taken notice of.

1. The Redemption of Human Nature from the Punishment of *Adam's* Sin, from Death, and from the Power of Death, which his Disobedience has absolutely brought us all under. And,

2. The Redemption of our Persons from the Punishment and Miseries in a state of Death to be inflicted on our own actual Transgressions, and the restoring us not only to Life, but to Happiness and Glory,

*The Re-
demption of
Humane
Nature, to
be first con-
sider'd.*

1. The first Thing to be consider'd and provided for in this Salvation, is the Redemption, Deliverance and Re-stitution of Human Nature, before we can hope for, or expect any particular Privileges, any Personal Comforts, Blessings or Advantages to our selves. In all our Reasonings and Discourses upon

upon this Subject, a mighty Regard is to be had to the Difference that there is between what belongs to all our Nature in general, and what belongs only to our Persons: I mean, what belongs to us all universally as Men, by Virtue of something done in our Nature by our Head and Representative, deriving thereby either Good or Evil upon us, without any regard to our own Actions, and what we do in our own Persons, and are either to suffer, or to be rewarded for on that account. The one is Absolute and Universal, and has no dependance on our own Personal Actions, either to prevent or to promote it. The other, as it is Personal, so it is Conditional, and will be determin'd this way or that, as we do Good or Evil. In the first of these ways was both our Creation and our Fall. God made Man Perfect; and the Original Righteousness and Innocency of *Adam* was the Original Righteousness and Innocency of Human Nature, and shews what Beings we his Offspring might have deriv'd from him, could we have deriv'd them without Sin.—Thus also the Sin and Fall of *Adam* was the Sin and Fall

Heb. ix.
27.

of Human Nature, by which not He alone became Mortal and subject unto Death, but all Mankind in him. Thus *in Adam all die*; and as the Fruit, and Consequence, and Punishment of his one single Sin, and in regard to his, but not our own Personal Offences, it *is appointed for all Men once to die*. This was the Revolt and Apostacy of Human Nature, the mischievous and pernicious Fruits of which extend to every individual Person of us.

So also in order to the Salvation of you, and me, and any other Person, Regard must first be had to the Restitution and Recovery of Human Nature. And accordingly the Foundation and first Step in the Salvation of Mankind, must be the Redemption of Human Nature, and the restoring of that to the happy Privileges and Advantages from which it fell by Sin, before any effectual Deliverance, any complete Felicity is to be expected or enjoy'd by any of us. Now in this matter there are two Things to be particularly regarded.

1. Our Redeemer's taking our Nature upon him, that He might become our Redeemer.

2. What

2. What He has done or suffer'd in that our Nature, in order to the Accomplishment of that Redemption.

1. His assuming our Nature. For so has the Wisdom of God ordain'd, that whatever meritorious Satisfaction, Atonement or Expiation is to be made to that end, it should be made in Human Nature. This I take to be the first great Instance of God's Righteousness in this wonderful and mysterious Dispensation; and that indeed which most eminently distinguishes it from such an Act of Despotick Power, and Arbitrary Dominion, as we have already seen to be dishonourable to God, and subject to dangerous Constructions among Men. That the same Nature that sinned and dies, atones for Sin, conquers Death, and restores us unto Eternal Life again. That we are redeem'd in the very same Flesh, and recover Immortality in the very same Way and Method of Justice by which we lost it. This is that eminent Instance of the Righteousness of God in our Salvation, that St. Paul recommends to our Thoughts, when he tells us, *That as by Man came Death, by Man*

*The great
Necessity of
Christ's In-
carnation.*

also should come the Resurrection of the <sup>1 Cor. xv.
21, 22.</sup>
Dead;

The Wisdom of God,

Dead: That as in Adam all die, so in Christ should all be made alive. That as in *Adam* our whole Nature became Mortal, and subject unto Misery, so in *Christ* our Redeemer our Nature atones for Sin, destroys Death, and rises again unto Righteousness and Life Eternal.

For this Reason it is, that none could be a proper Redeemer for us, but one that could and would assume our Nature, and take our Flesh upon him. Whatsoever of this kind was to be done in our Behalf, and to our Advantage, it must be done in our very Flesh, or it belongs not at all to us. — Angels therefore, however they may be commission'd by Almighty God to minister to the good of Mankind, and however they may in many Things, when so commission'd, be beneficial to us, yet all their Service, all their Performances, and all their Righteousness could not belong to us as our Righteousness, because not perform'd in our Nature. Nor could the Recompence of their Obedience in any tolerable measures or methods of Justice be imputable to us as our Recompence, while done in another Nature

Angels incapable of Redeeming us.

ture that we have no share in, nor any natural or necessary Relation to.

Upon this very Consideration it is that St. Paul at once asserts both the Necessity of Christ's Incarnation, and denies in consequence thereof, that the ^{Angels no share in our Redemption.} fallen Angels have any share in, or Benefit by his Redemption, ^{Heb. ii. 11, 12, &c.} For both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them Brethren. For as much then as the Children are Partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that thro' Death he might destroy him that had the power of Death, that is, the Devil; and deliver them, who thro' fear of Death were all their Life-time subject unto bondage. For verily, he took not on him the nature of Angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest in things pertaining unto God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People. He expressly asserts the Necessity of Christ's Incarnation, to make him a fit Person for our Redeemer, and for the Atonement of our Sins, as the true Efficacy and meritorious

ritorious Influence of all his Performances, in order to our Reconciliation, to have their Foundation in the Relation there is between us, as we are *Brethren*; that is, as by being cloth'd in our Flesh he makes himself the Representative by whom God has consented that this our Mortal Nature should be Deliver'd and Redeem'd.--- On this account he is call'd the *Second Adam*, that is, the second Head of Human Nature, the second Representative of our whole Kind, who was to do for us, and in our Flesh, what the first *Adam* had not done: Nay, who was appointed of the Father to restore and recover our Nature from all that Misery and Curse, which the Transgression of the first *Adam* had brought upon us.—For this Reason it has been truly and judiciously observ'd by my late Learned Friend now with God, *That where there is not a Deviation and Propurgation of the same common Nature, there cannot be a Communication of Moral or Natural Good or Evil.* And thus if God should create a new, another Man of the same Form, Image, Frame and Constitution with *Adam*, who, as new Created, was not descended

1 Cor.
xv. 45.

Mr. Stay-
noe, vol.
2. p. 96.

scended from his Loins, he could not reasonably become a proper Redeemer unto us ; in that what was not done or suffer'd in the very Nature and Flesh of *Adam*, could not reasonably and righteously be imputed to the Sons of *Adam*, nor avail to the Atonement of his, or of our Sins : In the same Flesh and Blood by which we fell, we must rise again. And the very same Nature that brought us under the Curse, and the Power of Death, must bring us to Life and Happiness again. In this is founded not only the Righteousness of our Redemption, but also the Right and Propriety which we have in the Benefits of any thing that Jesus Christ has either done or suffer'd for our sakes.

Let us then stop here a little, and View, and Admire, and Adore the unspeakable Goodness, and the wonderful Righteousness, and Wisdom and Justice of Almighty God in this first mysterious Act of our Redeemer ; in this first Step towards the procuring our Salvation. With what just Astonishment must we behold the very same way and method of Reason and Justice observ'd in our Recovery, that had

had been observ'd in our Fall! To find Human Nature deliver'd from Death, and restor'd to an Immortal Life by just such another Covenant and Dispensation as that by which we all became Mortal? And how excellently well does all this Account for the Necessity of that most mysterious Incarnation of the Blessed and Eternal Son of God? A Mystery, which the Angels themselves have been *desirous to pry into*? While by these means the very same Nature which in *Adam* fell, rises to Life again in *Jesus Christ*. And we, by our Redeemer's assuming our Flesh, become as Righteously, as Reasonably and as Justly entitled to the Benefits of his Obedience, and to the Advantage of his Performances in our Nature, as we were to Death and Misery by *Adam's Sin*. Thus wonderfully are the Righteousness, the Wisdom, the Goodness and the Justice of God in our Redemption consulted and vindicated by the mysterious Incarnation of his Blessed Son, and in such a manner, as neither Men, nor Angels, could have projected or devis'd without it.

1 Pet. i.
12.

Again,

in the Redemption of Man.

157

Again, in this very same Consideration, one of the otherwise most surprizing and unaccountable Providences admits of a reasonable and easie Solution. How much Pains has been taken, how many Volumes have been Written, and how many various Conjectures made to vindicate the Righteousness of God in the Fall of Man? That one Man should sin, and all the World besides be punish'd, and expos'd to Death and Misery for, and by his single Offence. Sometimes Men have look'd on Death as a common Debt of Nature, rather than a Punishment of Sin. Anon they refer all to God's Sovereign Dominion, who may do with us what he pleases. And yet none of these do so satisfactorily account for that wonderful and extraordinary Dispensation, as the looking forward on our promis'd Redeemer, and considering the same Scheme and Method of Justice laid down in our first Covenant, that was intended to be religiously observ'd in the second. The same Rule of Reason and Equity observ'd in the Punishment of Adam's Sin, that was intended to be observ'd in
our

This Method vindicates the Righteousness of God in punishing Adam's Sin by the Mortality of all Mankind.

our Deliverance from that Punishment. The same Righteousness in bringing us under the Power of Death, that was to be seen afterwards in our Recovery of an absolute and endless Immortality, vindicating hereby not only his Justice, but his Goodness, and tender Concernment and providential Care, in that as St. Paul tells us, *Where Sin had abounded, there Grace did much abound. For, not as the Offence, so also is the free Gift; but if thro' the Offence of one many be Dead, much more the Grace of God, and the Gift by Grace, which is by one Man Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. That as Sin hath reign'd unto Death, even so might Grace reign thro' Righteousness unto Eternal Life by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Rom. v.
20.

15.

21.

Let then the Atheists and Deists of the Age here try their Skill, and see if they can by any other Way, or Means, or Methods of Justice whatsoever that they can think of, so well consult the Honour of God, and the Harmony of his Attributes. Let 'em see here *Mercy and Truth* meeting together, and *Righteousness and Peace*, Justice and Reconciliation mutually supporting each other.

Psal. 85.
10.

other. If they can devise any other Method more for God's Honour, and more suitable to his unchangeable Perfections, and the eternal Obligation and Authority of his Laws, I dare be bold to say, that they will then threaten hard to undermine the Necessity of our Redemption. But if nothing of this can reasonably be pretended, then let us close with those Overtures of Mercy, and Pardon, and Salvation, which God has graciously exhibited to us by his Blessed Son in our Nature, and cloth'd with our Mortal Flesh.

But the Glory of God in this wonderful mysterious Dispensation, will be more conspicuous by proceeding to set forth, Serm. VI:

2. By what Actions and Performances, and by what Merit in those Actions and Performances, the Blessed Son of God Incarnate has made our Peace, and purchas'd that Eternal Redemption for us, which we could not otherwise have been Partakers of. *The Influence of Christ's Performances to our Salvation.*

Now this may be reduc'd to these following Heads.

I. His

His absolute Obedience to all God's Laws necessary to make away for Atonement of our Sins.

I. His having in our Nature fulfill'd all Righteousness, and paid an exact and entire Obedience to that first Covenant or Law, by the Transgression of which *Adam* fell, and all Mankind in him. He is all along set forth in Holy Scripture, as one who was in all his Life absolutely Innocent and Pure, perfectly Righteous and Unblameable in all his Conversation. *He did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth.* He was made in all things like unto us, Sin only excepted. He was thus represented under the Law, by that most remarkable Type of him, the Paschal Lamb. It was to be a Lamb of the first Year, and entirely without either Spot or Blemish. All which was design'd to instruct us, that the Person who was to Redeem us, and to make an Atonement for our Sins, must be one of spotless Innocence and Holiness, as Harmless as a new-born Infant, as White and Pure as the new-faln Snow. Such a High-Priest, and such a Sacrifice became us, as was Holy, Harmless, and separate from Sinners. Now to this his absolute and complete Obedience, by which he thus fulfill'd all Righteousness,

1 Pet. ii. 22.

Exod. xii. 5.

1 Pet. i. 19.

Heb. vii. 26.

ness, and preserv'd that Innocence spotless and entire, which Adam had corrupted and lost; St. Paul in some measure imputes the Justification of Human Nature: *As by the Offence of one* Rom. v.
18, 19. *Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation, so by the Righteousness of one, the free Gift came upon all Men to Justification of Life.* For as by one Man's Disobedience many were made Sinners, so by the Obedience of one shall many be made Righteous. He speaks here in a direct and plain Allusion to the Fall of Mankind by the Sin of Adam. And he argues about the Redemption of Human Nature, and the Recovery of that Life and Immortality which we all lost by him. He had before declar'd how all Mankind became Mortal by the Sin of Adam; *By one Man Sin entred into the World, and Death by Sin; and so Death passed upon all Men by him, in whom all have sinned.* And now he magnifies the singular Wisdom, Justice and Goodness of Almighty God, in so accommodating the Redemption and Restitution of Human Nature to the Rules and Methods of our Fall, that all the Misfortune and Disadvantage which Adam's Sin has brought

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Rom.

15, 17.

upon Mankind, is done away by the Obedience of Christ; and our mortal sinful Nature by his Righteousness restor'd to Life and Immortality: For if by one Man's Offence many be Dead, and Death reign'd by one, much more they, who receive abundance of Grace, and of the gift of Righteousness, shall reign in Life by one, even Jesus Christ. That the Apostle here by the words Righteousness and Obedience intended, that his actual Obedience to the whole Law of God, by which he in our Flesh fulfill'd all Righteousness without any Sin, Transgression or Offence, seems plain from the Opposition that is here made between Adam and Christ: By the Sin and Offence of one, by the Righteousness of one. By one Man's Disobedience, and by one Man's Obedience. The meaning of which is, that Adam Sinned, and by his Disobedience all Men Die: Christ was absolutely Righteous, and perfectly Innocent, and by his Obedience are all made Righteous, and entitled again to Life and Immortality. This is his Argument. By all which, if we mean no more than this, That the actual Righteousness and Obedience of Jesus Christ to that whole Law, to which

which the Promise of Eternal Life was made, was necessary by God's Decree, as Previous to the Expiation of our Sins, and to make our Nature Redeemable, it deserves to be taken notice of as a very remarkable Instance and Evidence of the Justice and Righteousness, as well as of the Mercy and Goodness of God in our Redemption. That in every Part and Branch of it He has consulted the Honour, Authority and Obligation of that first Law and Covenant, by the Transgression of which Mankind fell; and would not admit of any Expiation or Atonement for the Sins committed against it, until the Righteousness of it had been first exactly and completely fulfilled by an absolute, entire and perfect Obedience, in that very same Nature which had offended; whereby, as in the first *Adam* we see the Guilt, so in the second we may contemplate the Righteousness of Human Nature. By our having in the Person of our Saviour absolutely fulfilled the Original Conditions upon which the Promise of Eternal Life was given, before any manner of Pretensions are made to an Expiation or Atonement

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for

for our Offences. In consequence of which, our Deliverance from Death, and our new Title to Eternal Life, become, not a meer Arbitrary, altho' a Free and Gracious Gift; but are in some measure the Merit and Fruit, the Recompence and Reward of the Innocence and Holiness, as well of the Sufferings and Sacrifice of Human Nature in the Person of Jesus Christ. But,

Our Atonement in Christ's Death.

II. Christ Jesus was not only Obedient to the Law for us, but he also suffer'd Death for our Transgressions of it, and our Disobedience to it. And indeed whatever Necessity there might be for, or whatever meritorious Influence and Efficacy in the complete Innocence and spotless Purity of the Blessed Jesus, to put us into a redeemable State, yet we all know, that the New Testament every where lays the great Emphatic Force of all that Christ has done, or suffer'd for the Atonement of our Sins, in his Dying on the Cross for us: *In him we have Redemption thro' his Blood, even the Forgiveness of our Sins thro' the Riches of his Grace.*

Eph. i. 7.

Col. i. 18.

He having made our Peace thro' the Blood

Blood of the Cross. And all this so truly and properly in the way, and manner, and nature of a Sacrifice of Atonement and Expiation, that St. Paul has assur'd us, that all the Sacrifices and Expiation under the Law were so call'd, and so instituted, that they might be Types and Figures, and previous Representations of that grand Atonement made by the Blood of Je-
Heb. x. 1.
sus: The Law had only a shadow of good things to come; and the Temple, in which were offer'd Gifts and Sacrifices, was only a Figure for the Time then present. But Jesus Christ, not by the Blood
ix. 9, &c.
of Bulls, and Calves, and Goats, but by his own Blood, entred once into the Holy Place, having obtain'd Eternal Redemption for us. Thus he is our Savi-
26.
our, as in the end of the World he appear'd to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself. This is the Substance of our Christian Doctrin of Salvation by a Dying Saviour. And now, to gratifie the over-nice Curiosity of some of our Modern Rationalists, we must, it seems, consider what there is in this Sacrifice of the precious Blood of Christ, truly satisfactory to the Divine Justice and Vengeance, and that may reasonably

be allow'd meritorious to the Expiation and Atonement of Sin.

- It is, methinks, not a little hard to put this upon us. When we preach a Gospel, whose Divine Authority and Truth are so well attested, that we can defend it by unanswerable Arguments, and by the clearest and the strongest Evidence that Things of this Nature can admit; it's hard, I say, that the Doctrin of it should not be receiv'd upon the sure and indisputable Authority of such a Revelation, without calling God to account for the Reasons and Principles of his Dispen-sations, and trying his Infinite and Unsearchable Wisdom at the Bar of our own weak and shallow Under-standings; which to do upon almost any Pretence whatsoever, is Arrogant and Insolent: But when done out of a strong Partiality to our Sins and Vices, and only to make Cavils and Exceptions against Religion, it is impiously Daring and Bold, and inexp-ably Wicked and Profane.—But, Blessed be God's Holy Name, what-ever unknown Principles, and unre-veal'd Reasons there may be of this great stupendous Mystery in the secret
and

and unfearchable Councils of the Almighty, which we muſt not pretend to account for, till the final Revelation of all Things ; yet, as it was all deſign'd for the Good and Benefit of Men, ſo it is even at preſent ſo far accommodated to the Reaſon and common Underſtandings of Mankind, that even at this Bar there is much more to be pleaded for it, than can poſſibly be ſaid againſt it ; and ſuch a juſt Account to be given of the Reaſonableneſs of theſe Divine Decrees, and both of the Neceſſity and of the Merit of Chriſt's Sufferings to atone for our Sins, as the boldeſt Pretenders to Reaſon, and the greateſt Maſters of refin'd Underſtanding and a penetrating Judgment are not able to confute.

To make this Aſſertion good, let us,

1. Look back a little, and take a ſhort View of what has been before ſaid, as to the Nature, End and Reaſons of Atonement, from whence the Neceſſity of it ariſes, and to what Purpoſes it is directed. Now, we have ſeen already, that all this is taken from the Ends and Reaſons of puniſh-

ing Sin and Sinners; and that the true End and Reason of punishing Sinners, is only to bear witness to God's Hatred and Displeasure against their Sins, to vindicate the Honour of his Attributes, the Wisdom of his Government, and the Righteousness and Authority of his Laws. Were it not for these Principles and Considerations, I do not see that either the Prohibition, or the Punishment of Sin would be necessary; or that any Expiation or Atonement for it could reasonably be requir'd.

If therefore it shall appear,

2. That the Death of Christ was really and truly the Punishment of Sin, and such a Punishment as is found sufficient to all these Ends, and to answer all these Reasons and Purposes, to bear witness to God's Hatred of Sin, to vindicate the Honour of his Attributes, and the Wisdom of his Government, and the Righteousness and Authority of his Laws; it may then be allow'd to make a sufficient Satisfaction, Expiation and Atonement.

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We are therefore to consider the Death of Christ.

1. As having in it the true Nature of ^{Christ's} a Punishment of Sin. And this indeed ^{Death a} Death in itself is, according to God's ^{Punish-} Original Ordinance and Law, the ap- ^{ment for} pointed Punishment and Wages of Sin: ^{our Sins.}

The Wages of Sin is Death. And as ^{Rom. vi.} from the first Transgression of Man- ^{ult.} kind it was appointed for all Men once to Die, so Jesus Christ, in submitting himself to Death, submitted himself thereby to the Punishment of Sin. Dying is bearing the Punishment of Sin. But then,

That which is highly material in this Case is, that he did not bear this Punishment for any Sins of his own, for he was perfectly Pure, and absolutely Innocent, and without Sin; but he willingly submitted to Die for the Sins of all Mankind. Here therefore it is that we must again make mention of our Blessed Saviour's having in our Nature fulfill'd the whole Righteousness of God's Original Covenant and Law, by the Transgression of which Mankind became Mortal, as that which is primarily to be consider'd in the Meritoriousness of his Passion. It is this that

*Christ's
Death how
a Ransom
and a Sa-
crifice.*

that makes his Death to have in it the true Nature of a Sacrifice, that in the strictest Sense it was wholly and entirely undeserv'd by him. According to God's Original Ordinance and Decree, he was not under the Law of Death himself, as the rest of Mankind are, but exempt from the fatal Sentence, and entitled to an Immortal and Eternal Life, by his spotless Purity, and by his having fulfill'd the Whole, upon which the Promise of Eternal Life was made. Dying therefore in him was absolutely Voluntary and Free, to which he was under no Necessity, by virtue of any previous Ordinance or Decree, otherwise than as he gave himself for us, and willingly laid down his Life as our Ransom, and the inestimable Price of our Propitiation.

It is this alone, I say, that makes his Death properly call'd a Ransom and a Sacrifice. It is giving up himself, and his Life for us, when of all Mankind he alone could justly plead an Exemption from the Sentence of Death; and had no other Reason, no other Obligation, no other necessity of Dying, than as he offer'd up his
Blood

Blood as the *τὸ λύτρον*, the *τὸ ἀντάλλαγμα*, Mat. xvi. 26.
the Price of Redemption, in conside-
ration of which we are to be deli-
ver'd. xx. 28.

And this shews by the way how very unfit any other Man, besides Jesus Christ, was to make any such Atonement. Take the whole Race of Mankind besides, and we are all Sinners without exception; and as Sinners, under the Sentence and Power of Death: And he, who as a Sinner, wants an Atonement, for that Reason alone must be unfit to make one. He may lay down his Life by Dying, sooner than otherwise he would have done; but his Death could be no Ransom to redeem his Brother, because it was not in his Choice whether he would Die, or no. He was under the Sentence of Death, and under the necessity of Dying, one time or other, antecedently to any such Pretensions; and it was not in his Power possibly to avoid it. Dying, in any one who is a Sinner, cannot therefore properly be said to be a Voluntary giving up of Life, as a Ransom to God, because every Ransom, or price of Deliverance for Sinners, ought to be of some such Gift,

Gift, as was not otherwise due. But Death, the establish'd and decreed Wages of Sin, is due to every one who is a Sinner, and in that very Thing makes his Life altogether incapable of being a Ransom for Sinners, and a Propitiation for Sins.—It is the absolute Righteousness, and perfect Innocence of our Blessed Saviour, by his entire and complete Obedience to the whole Law, without any manner of Failure or Defect, that gives the first Merit to his Sufferings for our sakes, and makes his giving up himself to Death, to become a proper Punishment for Sin, and a proper Ransom and Propitiation for our Sins, by his being under no Necessity or Obligation of Dying on any other account.

The severity of his Sufferings influence in his Atonement.

2. Another Thing very considerable in this respect is The Greatness of our Saviour's Sufferings, and the Miserableness of that Death which he Died for our sakes. For, as there is no true Expiation and Atonement for Sin, without Punishment, as necessary to bear witness to God's Displeasure against, and Abhorrence of it; so consequently, the greater those Sufferings are, and the smarter the Sorrows and Tri-

Tribulations which our Redeemer on this account endures, the greater must be their Influence to atone for Sin, because in all this we have the more certain and undeniable Evidences of God's Displeasure and Indignation against it even while he pardons it; and the clearer Indications of his spotless Purity and unblemish'd Holiness, as Essential to him as his Mercy. And as the maintaining in this manner the Honour and Harmony of the Divine Attributes, is one great Reason of this Dispensation; so thus it is that we account for all the black and dismal Scene, all the sad and afflicting Sorrows, the mournful Tribulations and Persecutions, the tormenting Death and Passion of the Distressed, Crucified Jesus. They were all suffer'd for our Sins, and necessary to our Salvation. They were the Evidences of God's just Displeasure against us, for whose sakes, and in whose stead he was afflicted. And every Stripe, every Groan, every Reproach that reach'd his tender Heart, and wounded his innocent Soul, had its Influence to our Peace. And that because by this punishing the Sins of Human Nature in the Per-
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son of him who undertook by Sufferings to make Satisfaction for 'em, God attests his Righteous Indignation against our Disobedience, proclaims his absolute Purity and Holiness in the Fruits of his Displeasure, and vindicates the Honour of his Attributes, and the Wisdom of his Government, and the sacred Authority of his Laws, in the Severity of those bitter Agonies and Sorrows which he lays on the Person of our Redeemer. And thus every Instance and every Degree of Affliction which he felt on this account, by bearing the better Testimony to God's Abhorrence of Sin, makes the Pardon of our Sins and our Reconciliation so much the more easily to be obtain'd; in that it may now be granted so much the more securely without any just Blemish to the Wisdom of his Government, or to the Honour of his Divine Perfections.

So especially does the Dignity of his Person.

3. Another Thing of great Moment in this Affair is, The Greatness and Dignity of the Person suffering. For if the inflicting and suffering Punishment, as a Witness of God's Essential Holiness, and Abhorrence of Sin, be so indispensably Necessary, that there
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can be no sufficient Expiation without it. And if they are so peculiar in this Case, that the severer the Sufferings are, the greater is their Influence to appease God's Wrath; then also by the same Reason, the greater the Person is that suffers, the more efficacious must his Sufferings be to our Salvation. And that because as the Dignity of the Person adds much to the Merit of his Passion, so every Circumstance of this kind, by representing the Difficulty of our Pardon in the high Price of our Atonement, still magnifies the Glory of God in the Administration of his Mercy. In a Reconciliation so purchas'd, and on such Conditions, we the more clearly apprehend at one view both the Goodness and the Justice, both the Perfect Holiness and Infinite Mercy of our God, his Hatred of Sin even with Compassion to the Sinner, and his great and heavy Displeasure against our Disobedience at the same time that he forgives it, and delivers us from the Miseries that were due unto it.

All this is so very agreeable to the common Reason and Sentiments of Mankind, that perhaps this one Consideration

sideration will be found at the last Great Day, of the greatest Force and Moment to unfold the Mystery of this wonderful Dispensation. If nothing less than the Royal Prince himself, the Darling Son of a Great and Glorious King, shall be able to prevail in his Mediation for Rebellious Subjects, and not He neither, without bearing in some great Degree the Chastisements, which by the Law are denounc'd against the Offence; this speaks the Greatness and Severity of the Royal Displeasure against that Crime which he thus punishes in the Person of his only Son. And when the Heinousness and aggravating Circumstances of the Crime bears hard upon his Government, and the Authority of his Laws, it may in some Cases be not only Wise, but Necessary to require some such Satisfaction. This is just the Case before us. To bear witness to the Greatness and Justice of God's Displeasure against Sin, is the true Reason of all Punishment and all Expiation. And the more of this then is seen, either in the Innocency or Eminency of the Person suffering, or in the Severity of his Sufferings,

ings the more have they in 'em all the true Nature of Expiation. And the more conspicuously the Vengeance of God against Sin is by these means discover'd, at the same time that he extends his Mercy and Compassion to the Sinner, the more do all such Sufferings answer the Purposes for which they were intended, and have, by consulting the Honour of God, the greater Influence to our Salvation.

So that, however Mysterious and Inexplicable some parts of our Redemption may be, and are, to Human Reason and Understanding, yet the Grounds and Principles of his requiring Satisfaction for Sin, and for the violated Authority of his Laws by it, these lay level to the common Sentiments and Notions of all Mankind. And both the Honour of his Attributes, and the Wisdom of his Government, and the Authority of his Laws, which cannot but by some such Methods be supported, require, according to the common Principles of Human Reason, some such like Conditions and Considerations of Attonement, as the Christian Gospel has preach'd to us.

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And especially the Dignity of the Person suffering and satisfying for our Sins, is a Consideration, in common Reason, of most mighty Moment and Importance. Each Reflection this way shews us the more undeniably, that God must have a real Hatred, and an essential Abhorrence of that which he cannot in Honour think fit to pardon, but by the Death and Mediation of his only Son. It must needs be Amazing and Astonishing to all Mankind, to behold the Eternal and ever Blessed Son of God thus Suffering, and Bleeding, and Dying for us. A wise God, a just and good Father, would not admit all this in his only Child, without some extraordinary, necessary and important Reasons for it. And what are they? Why, to bear witness to the detestable Malignity of Sin; and to shew, that there is something in it too heinous, and too offensive for the Death and Passion of any meer and common Man to expiate. And therefore it was that God sent his only Son into the World, and gave him to be our Ransom and our Propitiation.

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In short, if Atonement at all be necessary, and a most remarkable Punishment of Sin necessary to that Expiation, both which I have prov'd above, then the Dignity and Divinity of our Saviour's Person is of so great Moment to that end, and to add to the Merit of his Sufferings and to the Prevalency of his Mediation, that we must never wonder to find those Persons who dispute his Divinity, to deny also the necessity of his Satisfaction, and to set up for an Arbitrary Remission of Sin, of meer Despotick Will and Power.

There is so near and close a Relation between these two, that they cannot be separated. The one can neither be Believ'd, nor Rejected without the other. Proportionably to the Greatness and Dignity of the Person suffering for, and bearing the Punishment of Sin, so of Necessity must rise or fall the Efficacy of his Sufferings to our Atonement. If Christ was no more than a meer Man like our selves, then indeed his Death would have but little in it of the true Nature of an Expiation. And we must at last resolve all the Pardon of Sin, and Mercy to Sinners, into that meer exercise of Dominion and

N 2 Power,

Power, which might as well have had place if Christ had never died. But if an Expiation by the Punishment of Sin be necessary, as I have at large shew'd it to be, then the Divinity of our Saviour is a Principle and Doctrin of the greatest Moment; in that the Greatness and the Severity of the Punishment are much enhans'd by the Greatness and the Dignity of the Person on whom it is inflicted.

Let us lay all these Things together then and consider, that if in the meritorious Obedience of the Blessed Jesus, whereby he fulfill'd the whole Law in our stead, if the giving himself up unto Death as our Ransom and Sacrifice of Atonement, if either in the Innocence, or Greatness of our Dying Saviour, or in the Smartness and Severity of his dolorous Passion; if in any, or all of these together, consider'd as Reasons and Conditions of pardoning Sinners, we see more plainly the Honour of God display'd, the Harmony of Divine Perfections asserted, Justice and Mercy reconcil'd, the Wisdom of his Government vindicated, Sin so remarkably punish'd, that the Authority of God's Laws is thereby maintain'd,
and

and all this more Gloriously, and in a more Eminent manner than can be in a meer Arbitrary Remission, or in Repentance alone; This is all that I now contend for. For this is enough to demonstrate, that there is nothing in this Dispensation either Mean or Trifling; nothing either unworthy of God, or unreasonable in itself, or unfit to be credited when deliver'd in a Divine and well attested Revelation.

And yet, to shew you farther the Glory of God, his Wisdom, and Goodness, and Righteousness in this our Christian Redemption, let us consider again,

4. That there is another Thing consequent upon our Saviour's Passion, that adds much to the Merit of it, and has no small Influence to set forth the Righteousness of God in our Salvation. And that is, that he not only suffer'd, but he also conquer'd Death for us. And let this be remembred as the

III. Third great and wonderful *His Victory*
Performance of our Redeemer in our *and Tri-*
Nature and our Stead. That he not *umph over*
Death,
only liv'd in an entire Obedience, and
fulfill'd the whole Righteousness of

that Law from which *Adam* fell by Transgression, and gave up his Life, and suffer'd Death as the Atonement and Propitiation for our Sins; but he has also conquer'd Death, and him that had the Power of Death, by his Resurrection from the Dead. This he did, as in our Nature, in our Stead, in our Behalf, so unspeakably to our Advantage; in that the Conquest that he thus gain'd over Death and Hell by his rising from the Grave, may very properly be call'd the Victory and Conquest of Human Nature. It is as much, and as truly, and as rightly so, as the Sin and Apostacy of *Adam* could be the Sin and Apostacy of Human Nature. And therefore there is as much Reason, and as much Equity and Justice that all Mankind should be restor'd to Life by the meritorious Passion of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in our Nature, and the Conquest over Death which he has obtain'd as our second *Adam*, our Covenant Representative by his Resurrection, as that the Disobedience of the first *Adam* should involve his whole Posterity in the guilt of Sin, and bring us all under the Sentence of Death and Condem-

demnation. The whole Reason and Righteousness of the first Dispensation was founded in our Relation to *Adam* as our Father, and as we are his Posterity descended from his Loins. And the second *Adam* Jesus Christ is, tho' not our Father, yet our Brother, who took our Nature on him, that he might accomplish for us in it what the first *Adam* had covenanted, but not perform'd. And therefore, as in this Relation he not only Died for us, but also conquer'd Death, and rose again in our Nature, and as our Redeemer, his Atonement and his Conquest may as reasonably and as righteously be imputed to us, in order to our recovering an Eternal Life, as the Sin of *Adam* was imputed to our Condemnation. And this seems to be what *St. Paul* himself intended, when he tells us, *Col. iii. 1.* That we are *risen with Christ*, as his Resurrection is the First-fruits and Pledge of that Victory over Death, and the Powers of Hell, which all Human Nature may obtain by him.

And here, methinks, we have again an undeniable Evidence of the Divine Nature of the Blessed Jesus, the Eter-

nal Son of God, our Saviour. He is, as St. Paul truly teaches us, *declar'd to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the Resurrection from the Dead.* And there is so much just Force and Truth in the Declaration, that nothing less than what is truly and essentially God, seems capable of so wonderful an Operation. If we were to suppose, what I do not know that it is impossible, I mean, that an Angel from Heaven should take upon him the Nature and Flesh of Man, and be Born of a Virgin in some such extraordinary and miraculous way as Jesus Christ was; yet, if we suppose again, that this Incarnate Angel should lay down his Life and Die for us, I do not see that he could have any Natural Power any more than a Human Soul has to rise again. He must rather in such a Case, as dying Men now do, continue under the Power of Death, and in a lasting state of Separation,

To Preserve, or to Restore a Mortal Body from Corruption; to Re-assume it, and to Animate it a second time with a new Life, seems too difficult a Task for any created Spirit, and as

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impossible to a deceas'd Angel, as to the separated Soul of a deceas'd Man. It is at least so far above all the known Powers of created Beings, and has such an evident Appearance of exceeding all the Capacity of Angels, that we have all the reason in the World, when we contemplate the Operation, and compare it with the frequent and Emphatic Titles of God so often given to Jesus Christ in the New Testament; we have reason, I say, to take it in the highest and the noblest Sense; in that the more of Real and Essential Divinity the Titles given him seem to bear, the more suitable they are to the astonishing Operations ascrib'd to him, and particularly to his Resurrection from the Dead. But to proceed,

5. *Lastly.* Another Thing that has its Influence to the Efficacy of Christ's Atonement, is, the Relation that he bears to us, not only as the Son of Man, but also as he is the Son of God. That Son by whom God made the World, and who on that account is justly call'd the *Heir of all things*, and *the First-born*, or Lord of every Creature. So that when he came into the World, strictly and properly speaking, *He came* unto

His Relation to us as the Son of God.

Heb. i. 2.
Col. i. 15.

Joh. i. 11.

unto his own, and to Redeem and Deliver his own from the Power and the Hand of our Enemy; to Redeem his own Possession, whom he had a Right in, and a Title to by Creation, and whom he created for Happiness, and in whose Innocency and Felicity he propos'd to have been Glorify'd. These, I say, he came to Redeem from the Mischiefs and Miseries of that Apostacy whereby the Devil had endeavour'd to defeat his Expectations. In Consideration of all which, the Deliverance and Restitution of Creatures whose Guilt has been so Aton'd for, and whose Calamities have been so Conquer'd, becomes an Act both of Reason and Justice, not only to the miserable Creatures so redeem'd, but also to the Redeemer; to him who has been both willing and able thus to satisfie for, and to assert his Right in his own Creatures, and to deliver and re-assume them out of the Destroyer's Hand into his own Jurisdiction and Possession. There is a great deal both of Reason and Justice, that he who

*Si enim
qui factus
fuerat a*

Deo homo ut viveret, latus a Serpente qui depravaverat eum, jam non reverteretur ad vitam; sed in totum projectus esset morti; victus esset Deus, & superasset Serpentis nequitia voluntatem Dei, Iren. III. 33.

had

had an Original Right over us by Creation, and had afterwards expiated our Apostacy by his Blood, purchas'd us by his Death, and conquer'd our Enemies by his Triumphant Resurrection, should have Power to deliver us from Death, to recover us once more to himself, and to restore us once again to our lost Life and Immortality. This is not only to assert his Right, and to vindicate his Title to us, but which is yet more remarkable, it is to shew how he is yet able under all these Difficulties and Disadvantages, to make all Things maugre all the Subtilty and Power of the Devil, to answer to the end of his Creation, and to minister to his own Everlasting Honour and Glory. Which indeed is one certain Principle of all God's gracious Dispensations, that they may all minister to the Glory of his Eternal and ever Blessed Son: For of him, and by him, and thro' him, and for him, are all things, that in him should all Fulness dwell.

Rom. xi.
36.
1 Cor.
viii. 6.
Col. i.
16, 17.

In one Word, when we contemplate Jesus Christ in our Nature, fulfilling that Law to which the Promise of Eternal Life was made, and making an Atone-

Atonement, a sufficient and satisfactory Atonement, for all the Offences committed against it, conquering Death, which God had made the Wages and Punishment of Sin; and him
 Heb. ii. 14. *that had the power of Death, that is, the Devil*; and in this Conquest asserting his own Right, and vindicating his own Dominion over, and Possession of us; in these Things we see in some good measure the Redemption of Human Nature. We see Mankind, who by the Sin of *Adam* were involv'd in Guilt, and brought under the Sentence and the Power of Death, restor'd by Jesus Christ in the very same way unto the Favour of God and Eternal Life again. Not in an Arbitrary way, and by an Arbitrary Power, that seems to break in upon the Harmony of the Divine Perfections, and is inconsistent with a Law of Righteousness, but in a way so agreeably to the Rules and Methods, the Reasons and Principles of Justice, the Obligation and Authority of God's first Ordinance and Original Decree, that in consequence thereof, the Benefits of Christ's Sufferings and Performances may as righteously be imputed to us, and to
 our

our Advantage, as the Disobedience of *Adam* was to our Condemnation. We see the just Efficacy and Influence of all this to our Pardon, and to the Recovery and Restitution of Human Nature so very Reasonable and Righteous, that, considering how we fell, it is now so far from being a Blemish to the Justice, or Wisdom, or Goodness of Almighty God to pardon our Sins in such a way, that after all this it would rather be a Blemish to all his Attributes not to pardon us, at the least, so far, as to deliver our fallen Nature from the Miseries that we were thus brought under, and to restore us to the Privileges and Blessings which we thus lost, and in the very same way had been depriv'd of. And the making way for such a Righteous Reconciliation and Restitution, is what we call Expiation and Atonement.

And seeing I am now mentioning the Great and Glorious Performances of our Dear Redeemer, in order to our Salvation, let me add,

IV. Lastly.

The Influence of his Ascension into Heaven.

IV. *Lastly.* His Ascension into Heaven. As God design'd us for Immortality there, so Christ not only Died and rose again, but is also ascended thither, and there sits on the Right-hand of God. His Ascension, according to the Scheme of this Divine Dispensation, seems as necessary to our Salvation there, as his Resurrection from the Dead to deliver and rescue us from the Grave. For as he is the Saviour of Mankind, and the Redeemer of Human Nature, in and by whom is all our Hope, and that too not in an Arbitrary way, but resulting from the Merits of his Sufferings and Performances in our behalf, there is no Admission for us into any beneficial State or Condition, but what he must of Necessity enter into before us. No Atonement to be made for Sin, but what he makes in Human Nature. No Conquest over Death, but what he has made by his own Glorious Resurrection. Nor any Entrance for Mankind into the Kingdom of Heaven above, but what he has first made by his own Ascension thither in our Nature. This is indeed the Glorious Exal-

Exaltation and Ascension of Human Nature in the Person of our Blessed Redeemer. And in the Influence and Efficacy of this his glorious Exaltation to exalt us also, Christ declar'd that he went into Heaven to *prepare a Place* Joh.xiv.2i *for us that we might be with him*, that we might Rejoyce and be Happy with him. To this end there he makes Intercession for us, pleading the meritorious Expiation of his Death; from thence he administers his Grace, and there he exercises his Dominion and Power in the Protection and Government of his Church.

But then I must here observe, that as it was not from a Celestial, but from an Earthly Paradise; that Mankind fell in *Adam*; so the Benefit of this his Exaltation is not so absolutely and universally communicated as the other Privileges and Advantages are. So far as we suffer'd by *Adam's* Sin, we do retrieve the Mischiefs by the Performances of Jesus Christ. And accordingly the great Advantage that we absolutely, and certainly, and unconditionally receive by our Redemption, is, a Deliverance from Death, and our being restor'd to an Eternal
and

and Immortal Continuance in Life. For which Reason I call'd it, and I think most properly, the *Redemption of Human Nature*; in that, as it thus far chiefly respects the Recovery of our Life lost by *Adam's Sin*, by a perpetual Reunion of Soul and Body; so it is thus far Absolute and Universal; it belongs to us all, as Men; and every Body, as certainly as we are Born of *Adam*, and Die by his Disobedience, shall be restor'd to Life again by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead. But then, as all that Misery that we were to expect in a state of Death was from our own Actual Iniquities and Personal Offences; so, whether that Future and Endless Life to which we shall be rais'd by Jesus Christ, shall be a Life of Happiness in Heaven, where Christ is gon before; or a Life of Misery and Torments in Hell and the Chambers of Darkness: This is not Absolute, nor Universal, but Conditional, and must depend on our new Covenant with God in our Redeemer, and on the Care which we shall take to answer the Ends, and Purposes, and Obligations of that.—This indeed is what we are next to speak to, *viz.*

II: The

II. The Second Part of this Great Serm. VII.
and Glorious Work, the Redemption The Salva-
of our Persons; and this by making tion of Men
Provision not only for a Perpetual, but by the Co-
also for a Happy Duration, for our venant of
Felicity as well as our Immortality, Grace is
that we may be Blessed to all Eternity. Conditional
And this, we have seen already, does
not absolutely, and immediately, and
inconditionally result from the Suffer-
ings of our Saviour, and the complete
Satisfaction and Expiation that he has
made by his Death; but must be ex-
pected and obtain'd by that new Co-
venant of Grace which he has kindly
made with us in his Blood, and esta-
blish'd upon the Merit of his Satisfac-
tion and Atonement.

In treating therefore on this Subject,
I shall,

I. Speak two or three Words in ge-
neral, concerning the Wisdom and
Goodness of God to Mankind, in
dealing with us by Covenants and
Stipulations.

O

II. Shew

II. Shew the Reasonableness and Necessity of a new Covenant on this particular Occasion. And then from hence descend

III. *Lastly.* To a more particular View of the Nature and Excellency of this our Christian Covenant in both its Conditions and Advantages, its Obligations and Duties, its Punishments and Rewards.

The Advantage of being under Covenant with God.

I. As to the Wisdom and Goodness of God in dealing with Mankind by Covenants, it is very great in several Respects. It not only helps to instruct our Minds, and inform our Understandings, and to regulate our Notions and Apprehensions of God, but thereby also administers great Comfort, and good Assurance and Confidence with him, and is of very great use to keep us from the two dangerous Extremes of Presumption on the one hand, and Despair on the other. For let Mens natural Notions of Him be never so bright, never so well rectify'd by improv'd Reason, and their Knowledge of his Divine Attributes

never

never so great, yet still their Expectations from him, and their Hope towards him will rise and fall, according to the Disposition and Temper of their own Minds. The Jolly, and the Gay, and the Sanguine, will alway be full of Hope, and big with Expectations from his Goodness, and Clemency, and Mercy, perhaps beyond Reason, and so far without Fear or Dread, as to have no due regard to his impartial Justice, and the tremendous Severity of his Vengeance and Indignation. And by this means they presume themselves to be very Innocent and very Safe, when they are very Criminal and in mighty Danger. On the other hand, the Melancholy and dejected Spirit, and especially when mov'd with the black Prospect of his past Miscarriages and Offences, is alway Doubtful, and Jealous above measure, sinks even into Despair, and is without Hope, and without Consolation. In both which Cases, it is very difficult to administer the proper Remedy, while it cannot be certainly known how far God will or will not forgive. There is nothing therefore more useful to Correct both these Extremes, and to prevent

the Danger of 'em, than our being under a known and exprefs Covenant with God. By the stated Conditions of which the vain presumptuous Sinner may see the Folly and Danger of expecting more Mercy and gentler Usage, than what God has stipulated with him in his Word; and of hoping beyond all the solemn Conditions and Declarations of his Covenant. And the desponding Sinner on the other hand, may with equal Plainness see the unreasonable Folly of distrusting God's Goodness where he has promis'd Favour and Mercy; and of doubting, when the God of Truth, who cannot Lye nor deceive us, has engag'd his Word and Honour for our Security and our Consolation.

And if there were no other Benefit and Advantage than this, this alone shews the Reasonableness, and Necessity, and great Advantage of Divine Revelation; in that as nothing is more useful and beneficial to all Mankind in both those Respects than an exprefs Stipulation and Covenant, so we know there can be no Covenant without a Divine Revelation. But all this by the way.

II. The

II. The second Thing to be consider'd under this Head, is, the Reasonableness and Necessity of a new Covenant, and of such a one as God has made with us all in Jesus Christ. And here I must argue as St. Paul has done in a Parallel Case: If the old one had been sufficient, no new one had been made: If the old one would equally have answer'd the Designs and Purposes of God, and have been equally Comfortable and Profitable to Men, without all question Salvation should have been by that alone, and a new one had not been necessary. — But as the Condition of the first Covenant ran upon an absolute and entire Obedience, without any manner of allowance for Transgressions or Offences: This however reasonable and agreeable to the completer Faculties and Powers, and to the greater Strength with which Man was originally Created, is yet altogether impracticable in this our Faln, Frail, Corrupt and Degenerate State. Absolute Righteousness, and spotless Innocence is now altogether impossible for us. And therefore it had been a most severe and hard

The Necessity of a new Covenant.

Gal. iii. 21:

Thing upon us, to have deliver'd us from a state of Death, and to have put us upon a new Trial, and yet not to have made a new Covenant with us, and to have mitigated the rigorous Conditions of the old one, agreeably to our many Weaknesses and Infirmities. To have bound us still to the absolute and unblemish'd Righteousness of the first Law, must necessarily have requir'd that we should also be restor'd to the Original Strength and Spiritual Power which were given us at our first Creation, and when we were first thus oblig'd. 'Tis this alone could make such Obedience possible for us, without which it were Cruelty, not Kindness, and insulting our Infirmities rather than shewing Compassion to our Misery to propound any such Thing to us, or expect it from us.

But suppose all this too had been done; what then? Why the Consequence of it had been this, That the same Covenant, with the same Conditions in itself; and the same Capacities in Man, must in Reason and Righteousness have had the same Punishments annex, and the same Mis-

chiefs

chiefs and Miseries upon our Transgression and Violation of it. So that while in such a Case we were still in a state of Trial, we could enjoy the Benefit of such Redemption no longer than we continu'd in an absolutely perfect and sinless Obedience, without any the least Failure or Offence. In such a Case the first Fault would bring us back again into that very state of Death and Misery from which we had been redeem'd by Jesus Christ; and we should then want again another Saviour, another Redeemer to make our Peace. Each Man's first Transgression and Disobedience would put him again into a state of Sin, and Death, and Misery, and call for another Son of God to come down from Heaven to make a second Expiation and Reconciliation for him. And at this rate, as every Man is now to be answerable only for himself, according to that Covenant, I do not know but that as many Sinners as there should be thus found in the World, there would be wanting also as many Saviours to redeem 'em. For the same Covenant establish'd upon the same Conditions, would necessarily call for the same

Punishment to be inflicted, and every Return into the same Misery want a new Redemption and Expiation.

There is therefore, I say, nothing more agreeable to the wise Purposes and Designs of Almighty God for the Happiness of Men; nothing more beneficial and necessary for them, in order to their more easie and sure Attainment of Salvation, than a new Covenant establish'd on more gracious and favourable Conditions. And this, not by superseding the Reasons, and wholly abrogating the Principles and Obligations of the first; for this has not been done, as I shall shew hereafter; but by so far mitigating the Conditions of it, as that it may the better be accommodated to the Weakness and Infirmities, the Corruption and Degeneracy of our fallen Apostate State. This is indeed what Christ has done; and in regard to his kind and favourable Condescension in it, it is, and with the greatest Reason and Propriety, styl'd *a Covenant of Grace*. And with how much Reason and Wisdom, Goodness and Righteousness He has done this, will be seen by proceeding,

III. To

III. To a serious View of it.

1st. In its Conditions.

2^{dly}. In its Promises and Advantages. As to all which I have no more to do than to shew, That there is nothing unreasonable in its Conditions; nothing in its Rewards, but what is Righteous with respect to God, as well as Beneficial unto Men.

1st. As to its Conditions they may in general be comprehended under these two Expressions, Faith and Repentance. Which, I think, when fairly interpreted, will include in 'em all other Duties whatsoever that are requir'd from a Christian by the Gospel. To these the Promises of Mercy and Pardon and Everlasting Salvation are made; and I think, that there is nothing Unreasonable or Unrighteous in all this. For,

1. As to Faith, it has indeed a peculiar respect to our Lord Jesus Christ, as the only begotten Son of God, and the Redeemer and Saviour of Mankind, in whom, and in whom alone, we have Remission of Sins, and a Promise of Salvation thro' the Atonement of his Blood. This is that Belief in the

Faith a necessary Condition in our Covenant.

The Wisdom of God,

the Son of God, to which, and especially when the Sincerity of it is attested by that other part a true Repentance, both these solemn Declarations of our

Joh. iii. 16. Saviour are to be apply'd: *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have Everlasting*

Mar. xvi. 16. *Life. And again, He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.*—The

Reasonableness of which Law will be very plain, when it shall be consider'd, That as in Natural Religion, *He that cometh unto God, must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him;* and must have that his Belief as the Principle of his Worship and Devotion; so here also, he that cometh unto Christ, or unto God by Christ, for the Pardon of Sin, and the Salvation of his Soul, must believe in Jesus as the Saviour of the World, and make that his Faith the Principle of all his Hope, and of all his Devotion to, and of all his Expectations from him. God must either be suppos'd to exhibit this Salvation blindly, and promiscuously, and without distinction to all Men, and without any religious

gious Conditions at all; and this is in other Words but that very Arbitrary Remission of Sin, which destroys the Necessity of Redemption, and for many Reasons is necessarily to be exploded; or else it must be expected as a Favour and a Blessing to be obtain'd by Prayers and Supplications, as all Blessings are from God, and upon the Condition also of a true Repentance. Now as this latter way is, without Dispute, the more agreeable to, and the more worthy of him; so I cannot see but that Faith is as necessary and fundamental a Principle for a Christian that would hope for Salvation by Jesus Christ, as the Belief of a God can be in Natural Religion. In short, Hope and Expectation founded upon our Faith, must be the Foundation of Religion in 'em both. And therefore if the Christian Doctrin of our Redemption and Salvation be confess'd true and worthy of our Acceptation, it cannot but be both Reasonable and Necessary, that Faith in Christ should be made one of the indispensable Conditions of obtaining it. Necessary, First for the Glory of our Redeemer, that all Men in a deep and serious sense of his wonderful

ful Condescension should, according to
 Joh. v. 23. God's Decree, *Honour the Son as they
 Honour the Father*: And Necessary also
 in regard to the Good of Men, that
 they may be led by this Goodness to
 come unto God by him, by whom a-
 lone they can be sav'd; and in the
 incontestable Truth and Divine Au-
 thority of his Religion, see the Necess-
 sity of that universal Holiness and faith-
 ful Obedience which are recommended
 in it. And this is indeed what the
 Gospel means by *Faith*, when the
 Promise of Eternal Life is made to
 it.

*The Justice
 of Punish-
 ing Men
 for their
 Unbelief.*

And however severe the Sentence of
 Damnation to Unbelief may seem, yet
 that also, is, I think, sufficiently to be
 justify'd, when we consider that the
 Unbeliever here spoken of, is, not he
 who never heard, but he who having
 heard refuses to believe the Gospel.
 And that there are, as indeed in my
 Opinion there are, such strong, and
 clear, and certain convincing Eviden-
 ces of the Truth of the whole Christi-
 an Religion, that the Atheist may as
 reasonably excuse his Atheism, and
 Disbelief of one God, and with as
 good

good and as just Pretences, as the Deist can his Disbelief of Jesus Christ.

2. The second general Condition of ^{Repentance} our Christian Covenant, is ^{indispensa-} Repentance. ^{bly necessa-} By which I mean such a hearty and sincere Sorrow for all the Evil we have done, as becomes the Principle of a better Conversation, and leads us, in every Instance, to do no more so Wickedly, but universally to do Good. And that God should require this of us, and make this one of the indispensable Conditions of all the Mercy that we hope to obtain by Jesus Christ, no Body sure can wonder. And especially when he shall reflect, That to do otherwise, instead of keeping up the Authority of God's first Law and Ordinance, of establishing Mankind in Happiness on the condition of Holiness, is at once so to abrogate and supersede all the Obligations of it, as to leave Mankind at liberty to indulge themselves in all the Lewdness, Sensuality, Corruption and Debauchery, which either their own wicked Hearts and vile Affections, or the Subtilty of the Devil could prompt them to. This, I say, than which nothing can be more disagreeable to a Pure and Holy God,

God, must yet needs have been the Natural, Necessary and Inevitable Consequence of not making a true and sincere Repentance an indispensable Duty, and a Condition absolutely necessary to Salvation.

And therefore, tho' we are now fallen into so Infirm, Corrupt and Degenerate a State, that the absolute Righteousness which was originally requir'd, is become Impossible and Impracticable, yet such as is in our Power, such as our Apostate State will well admit of; to avoid Evil, and shun Temptations, and to do all the Good we can, and to return from Sin as soon as ever we become sensible of the Folly and Danger of it: This God could not but require, and has exacted, and does exact it from us with all the Strictness and unchangeable Resolutions imaginable. And that he should do so, no Body, I think, can complain.

How Repentance comes to be admitted.

It may rather be made a Question, how Repentance should now be admitted as the great Condition of our Salvation, more than it was before. And when 'tis acknowledg'd, and pleaded, and defended, that this cannot

not

not expiate Sin, how comes it to be allow'd a sufficient Condition of the second Covenant? It was never thought sufficient under the first, and it is still as far from perfect Righteousness and absolute Innocence, as it was from the Beginning. And therefore if it was not sufficiently consistent with the Honour of God's Attributes and Divine Perfections, and with the Reason, and Authority of his Laws, to make this the Condition of our Happiness at our Creation; how comes it to be so under our Covenant of Redemption, while the Reason and Authority of God's Ordinances are still the same? This may possibly be pleaded, and objected by some; and altho' the Design of this whole Discourse has its Tendency to the removing and answering such Objections, yet to set this Matter in a clear and satisfactory Light at once, let these three Things be consider'd.

First, That Repentance is the most that this our Degenerate and Apostate State can now attain to. One of the great Reasons given above of God's requiring at our Original Creation an Absolute Obedience, even to a Perfection

*It is all
that is
Possible*

fection of Innocence and Righteousness, was a regard to the complete Condition in which Man was created. He was created with such a Pure Heart, and Upright Mind; with such a large Capacity and fulness of Strength to do God's Will, and so entirely without any Infection from Sin, that such an Obedience in such Circumstances was easie as well as reasonable, and not attended with any Difficulties or Hardships. — But now our Case is alter'd, and we are all born in Sin, having our Nature both Corrupted and Infirm, and our Passions eager and irregular, and our Affections and Desires vitiated and tainted with the poisonous Infection of sinful Pleasures and sinful Practices. By which means what before was easie, is now become utterly impossible. So that we must be either restor'd in our second Trial, and under our second Covenant to the same large Measures of Strength and Spiritual Power that we were Partakers of before our Fall, and that, if we should fall again, would still require a new Redemption, or else we must have the Condition of our new Covenant and Trial mitigated agreeably to the
the

the Capacities that we have of performing it ; and have no more requir'd from us in a Frail and Mortal State, than what our Frail and Mortal Condition will admit. And Repentance is the only proper and fuitable, because the only possible Condition to an Infirm and Degenerate State. But,

Secondly, This Repentance for Sin does not make a sufficient Expiation for it ; nor is it accepted on its own account , but, as we have seen already, for the sake, and thro' the Merit and Mediation of Jesus Christ. 'Tis in *his Name*, that *Repentance and Remission of Sins* are commanded to be Luk xxiv:

preach'd. And the Atonement is not made by our Contrition, but by *his Blood* which he has shed for our Expiation. For this Reason Christ himself calls it *the Blood of the New Testament*, Mat. xxvi: and St. Paul *the Blood of the Covenant*, Heb. x. 29. and the *Blood of the everlasting Covenant*. xliii. 20.

By all which seems to be meant, that the Death of Christ, the Expiation of our Sins by his Blood, and his bearing the Punishment of our Sins, in Vindication of his Father's Honour, and of the Character of his Holiness and Justice, makes way for that exer-

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cise of Mercy which the Reasons and Principles of the first Covenant could not otherwise admit of. And thereby becomes such a Reason and Inducement to the Remission of Sins, that Almighty God thro' the Merit of that Blood in which his Honour is consulted, and the Glory of his sacred Character kept up, stipulates and promises, and engages his Faith and Word for Pardon, and Peace, and Eternal Salvation to all them that truly Repent. So that it is the Death and Blood of Christ, that comes in stead of, and answers the Ends and Reasons of our Punishment; and thereby makes that Pardon, on the Conditions of Repentance, both Reasonable and Righteous, which otherwise had not been so; and that imperfect Service acceptable before God, to our Eternal Happiness, which otherwise could not have avail'd to that End. But then I must add,

Thirdly, and Lastly, That in all this, not only the Reason and Principle, but the whole Authority of the first Original Law or Decree are still so far kept up, that there is no Recovery, no not even by Jesus Christ, of that Immortal Bliss and Happiness which we
lost

lost by Sin, until we shall recover also by him that full Perfection of Righteousness and Holiness, by falling from which our Felicity was taken from us. Thus far therefore the Decree still stands good, that so long as we continue in a Lapsed, tho' a Penitent State, we are only in a State of Trial, and not of Recompence. And as our Infirmities are great, so our Delights are, generally speaking, as imperfect as our Righteousness. And as in the best of us there is an unhappy mixture of Wisdom and Folly, of Innocency and Guilt, of Obedience and Transgression, so in our Circumstances here on Earth, there is commonly the like mixture of Comforts and Crosses, of Delights and Troubles, of Pleasures and of Grief. All our Enjoyments and Happiness are allay'd with one kind of Sorrows or another, and chequer'd with such Vexations and Disappointments, that we are as far from being completely Happy, as we are from being completely Innocent, or Obedient. Nor shall we ever attain to an Absolute Perfection of Immortal Bliss, until we are by Jesus Christ restor'd to a

The Wisdom of God,

Capacity of complete and perfect Holiness.

This therefore is what I cannot but mention, as a most wonderful and remarkable Instance both of the Wisdom, and Goodness, and Righteousness of God, in the Provisions made by our new Covenant of Grace. That altho' he has most mercifully, and with wonderful Condescension adapted the Conditions and Duties of our new Trial to the Infirmities and Incapacities of our Degenerate State, and made our weak and imperfect Services acceptable thro' the Merits of the Death of his Son, and the Power of his Mediation, yet he has even, all this notwithstanding, so far kept up the Authority and Obligation of his first Original Law, that still Absolute Righteousness and Immortal Happiness are inseparable. And we shall never attain to the Fulness and Perfection of the one, till we shall be also restor'd to a full Perfection of the other. And as *without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*, so without being restor'd to the complete Degrees of that perfect Purity and Righteousness which an Heavenly Life in the Presence of God requires,

we

we can never be allow'd to be Partakers of all that Joy and Bliss which are attending upon the Presence of our Great and Glorious God.—As the one was by God's Original Decree ordain'd and appointed to be the Reward of the other, so they are still kept so inseparable, that Misery will be the constant Companion of Sin, and no true and perfect Felicity till we arrive at the happy Place, where our Spiritual Capacities shall be recover'd in their full Measure, and our Obedience be made as Complete as the Glory and the Felicities that we shall enjoy. And this brings me from the Conditions to speak,

2dly. Of the Promises and Advantages, the Privileges and Benefits of this our second Covenant. And here, passing by all that may be comprehended under the Expressions of *Adoption*, and *Sons of God*, and *Children of God*, all the manifest Indications of the Divine Love, and Favour, and gracious Kindness to us, in our Relation to, and Communion with him in his Worship, and in his Sacraments, and by the Ministry of his Church, and all that Protection, and all those

The Benefits of our Christian Covenant.

Temporal Blessings which we may reasonably hope for and expect under the Government of that Blessed Jesus, whom God the Father *has made both*
 Aft. ii. 36. *Lord and King*, and to whom he *has*
 v. 31. *committed all Power*, and all Authority
 Mat. *both in Heaven and on Earth*, passing by
 xxviii. 18. all Titular Privileges and Honours, all external Evidences of Communion and Kindness, and all the Temporal Advantages and Benefits that may flow from them, as benign Influences from the Head to the several Members of the Body, in order to our present Peace and Consolation; I shall speak only of these two great Privileges and Benefits of our Christian Covenant, that respect more immediately the Eternal Welfare and Happiness of our Souls in the World to come.

1. The Administration of Divine Grace here to enable us for, and assist us in those Duties and Virtues which are indispensably requir'd from us. And,

2. The Recompening our Sincere, tho' Imperfect Endeavours in Obedience and Repentance with the Immortal and Everlasting Glories of God's Heavenly Kingdom.

1. The

1. The Administration of Divine ^{of Divine} Grace to enable and assist us in doing ^{Grace.} Good, and practising the several Virtues and Duties of Religion. For, as by *Adam's* first Apostacy and Sin we lost that Capacity for an Absolute and Complete Obedience with which Mankind was at first endow'd, so this Corruption and Infirmary of our Nature are still so much enlarg'd and encreas'd by evil Practices and evil Habits, that all Mankind groan under a sense of it, tho' the Holy Scripture only does plainly and clearly account for the Reasons and the Manner how this Evil came upon us. The New Testament more especially does in almost a Thousand Places and Expressions so attest and declare our receiving Help and Assistance from God, and by the Indwelling of his Spirit in all the good and religious Actions which we do, that to me, I confess, no one Doctrin in our Divine Revelation is more plain, and certain, and incontestible, than the Necessity of the Divine Grace of God's Holy Spirit in order to a Holy Life. And I will add too, than the Readiness of our gracious God *to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask it,* and ^{Luk. xi. 13.} that

that I improve it well when it is communicated. 'Tis to the want of this that St. Paul tells us, *The Good that*

Rom. vii. 19. *we would do, that we do not; and the Evil that we would not, that we do.* 'Tis

from the Absolute Necessity of this, that the same Apostle tells us in the next Chapter, *That if any Man have*

viii. 9. *not the Spirit of God, he is none of his.* And it is also from the Indwelling of this Divine Grace in all the true Children and Servants of God, that our Bodies are call'd the *Temples of God,*

i Cor. vi 19.

and of the Holy Ghost that is in us.

And I think that there can be nothing pleaded against all this, but that it's very agreeable both to the Wisdom and the Goodness of Almighty God, and very much to the Benefit and Advantage of Mankind.

What more wonderful Instance can there be of Goodness, than to exhibit to us that Blessing and Favour by which we become capable of attaining Salvation, in performing the Conditions upon which alone that is promis'd to us, and without which it must become altogether impossible for us to be Happy?

And

And it cannot but be a wise Thing also in God to make us thus dependant on him, for one of the choicest Favours that he can bestow. It must invite us to frequent Prayers and constant Devotions; it must help to make us sensible of the Danger, and of the Mischief of Sin, in rendring us unfit for, and uncapable of receiving so great a Blessing. And in the Consequence of all this, it cannot but have its Influence and Efficacy to restrain us from Vice, as that which of all Things tends most inevitably and fatally to our everlasting Ruin and Destruction. So that I think there is nothing that can so much as plausibly be pleaded against this part of our Christian Covenant, unless it should be thought to charge the Impenitency of those to whom Divine Grace is deny'd on God; and thereby seem inconsistent with the Liberty of our own Choice, in the Determination of our own Actions and Conditions.—But, when it shall be consider'd again, that our good God kindly *prevents us by his Grace*, and tenders his Holy Spirit to all that are willing and ready to receive it; and never withdraws it, until it is neg-

The Advantages of depending on God for his Assistance.

neglected and abus'd ; and also that in its Operation, it does not make us meer Passive Clock-work and Machines, but is such a Concurrent, Assisting, Strengthening and Sanctifying Principle, as leaves us as much at Liberty in the Determination of our Actions, as *Adam* himself was before his Fall, all such Objections must evidently appear of no Moment, and of no Force. And in all our Contemplations on this Subject, we shall have great cause to Bless and Praise the Goodness of our merciful God, who by the benign Influences of his Holy Spirit, thus leads, and guides, and directs us ; strengthens our Weakness, and sanctifies our Corruption, till Religion, which was before a Burden, becomes most easie, and our Duty our Delight. This, I say, should teach us to Bless and Praise the Goodness of our Heavenly Father, and moreover to Glorify the Eternal Son of God, and to Prize most highly the New Covenant in his Blood, by which, and by whom alone, such an inestimable Favour and Blessing is promis'd and exhibited to us.

2. The second great Advantage of this Covenant, is, the Recompence of ^{Future} ^{Happiness} ^{in Heaven} Reward. That good and gracious God, who in Compassion to our Misery, gave his Son to make an Expiation for our Sins by his most precious Blood, and gives the Sanctification of his Holy Spirit to enable us for good Works, has also committed the Judgment of all Mankind to that his Blessed Son and our Redeemer, and left the Rewarding both of our good and of our evil Actions unto him. And that Blessed Jesus, who Died for us, and has made a new Covenant with us in his Blood, has by that new Covenant promis'd to, and stipulated with us, to reward our Faith in him, and our true Repentance and sincere Obedience towards God, however short of our Original Perfection, with Everlasting Life and Happiness in the World to come. And then, and then alone, shall our Redemption be Complete, and our Salvation Perfect, when the same Jesus, who Died for us, and by his Dying has conquer'd Death, shall raise us all from the Grave now to Die again no more: But, as St. Peter expresses it, to be *made Partakers of the Divine*

*The Wisdom of God,*Eph. iv.
24.

Divine Nature; and as St. Paul, to be *renew'd in Knowledge, and in Righteousness and true Holiness, after the Image of him that created him.* And in the larger Measures of that Divine Image which was first communicated at our Creation, and since our Fall is begun only by Divine Grace in this present Life, and shall at the last Resurrection be made Complete, we shall be translated into the Presence and Kingdom of God, there to live, and reign, and rejoyce with him to all Eternity. Not to fall again by a second Apostacy, because not put then into a second Trial, but to partake of a Fulness of Joy, and of Rivers of Pleasure for ever and ever.

Consists chiefly in the Change and Improvement of our Nature.

1 Cor. xv.
50.

Let it here be once again remark'd, that this is not carrying us to Heaven with the Frailties and Infirmities of an Apostate State about us; for even the Expiation of Jesus Christ himself would not admit, that *Flesh and Blood should thus inherit the Kingdom of God.* But as the gracious and glorious Design of God our Heavenly Father is, instead of that Earthly Paradise from which *Adam* fell, to raise and exalt all his Children to a more Blessed and a Diviner State

State in his own Presence in Heaven, where Jesus Christ our Redeemer is now gone before, and sitteth on high exalted on his Right-Hand, so accordingly one great part of our Reward and Remuneration then and there will be, in having our Natures chang'd by the Power of God in our Resurrection, and improv'd and refin'd, and spiritualiz'd and exalted, and made more large and ample *Partakers of the Divine*. Our Bodies shall be rais'd *Spiritual Bodies*, and admit such Alterations as to their Temperament and Qualities, that in those alone *Corruption* may truly be 1 Cor. xv. said to *put on Interruption*, and that 53. which is *Mortal to put on Immortality*. And with such advantageous Changes too in all the Powers and Faculties of our Minds and Souls, in the Brightness and Clearness of our Understandings, enrich'd with all the Treasures of Divine Wisdom and Knowledge, in sanctifying our Passions and Affections, in guiding and strengthening the Powers of our enfeebled and corrupted Wills, and in transforming the whole Man not only into that Divine Similitude and *Image of God*, after which we were originally created, but with such
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The Wisdom of God,

peculiar Advantages as to all the Religious and Spiritual Capacities that may fit us for an Heavenly Life, that as Christ himself has declar'd, we shall become as the *Angels of God*. And therefore we very much mistake, and think too meanly and defectively of our Future Felicity, when we conceit it to consist chiefly in our being translated into Heaven above; in that whatever additional Advantages it may receive from the Glories of the Place, the Place and Abode of Angels, in the Presence of our God, yet one great part of our Reward and of our Happiness will consist in the glorious and beneficial Change that will then be made in our selves, and in the Faculties and Powers of Human Nature. And this I have all along hinted at, and now mention it again, as the great and wonderful Instance of the Righteousness and Wisdom, as well as of the Goodness of God. That tho' it is Rewarding an imperfect Service in us with everlasting Glory and complete Felicity, yet it is so contriv'd, that not only our Sins are Aton'd for and Expiated, but our Nature also so chang'd and renew'd, that we are made

made capable of an Absolute, Complete and Perfect Conformity to the whole Will of God, at the same time that we are admitted to this Happiness; whereby the Original Decree is so far observ'd, that perfect Righteousness and perfect Felicity are still inseparable. A State of Sin is still such an everlasting Bar to the Enjoyment of it, that no Expiation of our Guilt will be sufficient to bring us to this inestimable and unspeakable Glory, unless we are also first restor'd to the lost Advantages of the Divine Image in which we were at first Created, when we were at first design'd for a Blessed and Happy Immortality.—This therefore is what we peculiarly obtain by Jesus Christ in our new Covenant of Grace, and thro' the Merits of his Death and Passion. That he not only raises us from the Dead, and brings us again to Life and Immortality, but with such advantageous Changes in the Glories of our Resurrection, as that in them we shall find the Good Use and careful Improvements of those Measures of Divine Grace and Sanctification, which we receive in this present time of Trial, rewarded with such larg-

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Christo
Jesu reci-
perimus,
Iren. 3. 20.*

The Wisdom of God,

larger Measures of Righteousness, Wisdom, Knowledge, Virtue, Goodness and Holiness, as may fit us for the Participation of those Pure, Divine, Spiritual Joys with which God has all along intended to Recompence the faithful and sincere Obedience of Mankind.

This is in short the Sum and Substance of what is promis'd to us by Jesus Christ in his Gospel. In all which there is nothing, I think, that the greatest Enemies of Christianity can reasonably object against. It's a Felicity very desirable in itself, and what all Mankind would so willingly be Partakers of, that no Man ever yet spake slightly or indifferently of it, but those only who had no Hope that they should ever attain to it. It is not given, as some would seem to look for it, of meer Arbitrary Dominion and Power, but so truly and properly in the way of Righteousness, and as a Reward of Obedience and Repentance, that without a strict regard to these Conditions, no Man whatsoever shall attain to it. *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord.*

And

And accordingly I must observe again, that the same Gospel which thus renders Mercy and Peace, Reconciliation and Eternal Life to the Faithful and the Penitent, denounces also Eternal Torments in Hell to the Vicious, and Wicked, and Disobedient. Nor is there any thing either Unreasonable or Unjust in all this: It's all pursuant to God's Original Decree, and to the unchangeable Obligations and Authority of the first Covenant and Law, that a state of Sin, and a state of Immortal Happiness, are incompatible. And as we have seen above, that this Original Ordinance and Decree having its Foundation in the Eternal Nature and Difference of Things, I mean of Good and Evil, and of their Relation unto God, He could not but in regard to his own Perfections establish such an Ordinance; so he can now no more supersede the Obligations and Reasons of it, and act contrary thereto, than he can deny himself, and cease to be Holy, that is, cease to be God.

It is Preposterous therefore, and highly Absurd to complain of the Severity of such Threatenings, and of such a Sentence. Had they proceeded

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only from a Changeable Will and Arbitrary Power, there had then been Colour for such Complaints. But when the whole Ordinance and Sanction with all its Fruits and Consequences have their Foundation in the Essential Purity and Holiness of God, to complain of Severity in such a Case, is in effect to complain, because God himself is Just and Holy, and because he makes the Perfections of his Nature a Rule and a Guide to him in all his Actions and all his Dispensations. And yet he could not be a Just, and a Pure and a Holy God, if he did otherwise.

*No, not
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ternal.*

Nor will the Eternity of the Torments threaten'd and to be endur'd, at all help to make up the Justice of the Complaint; in that the perpetual Duration of our State is not added to us as a Part of our Punishment, nor does it belong to us peculiarly as miserable, but proceeds from our very Creation, and has its Foundation in the Nature that we receive from God. God has made us Creatures, as to our Souls particularly, of an Immortal and Everlasting Duration. And therefore tho' the Resurrection from the Dead be indeed

indeed from and by Jesus Christ alone, yet this only alters the manner of our Continuance by a Re-union of Soul and Body, but in Truth and Reality adds not one Minute to our longer Existence. If therefore God makes an Immortal Creature with a full Intention to be Glorify'd in his Holiness and in his Happiness, and instead of this, that Immortal Creature will be Wicked, and by Wickedness must be Miserable, to whom does he most owe the Eternity of his Torments, and where lies the Justice of his Complaint? God, it's true, made him Immortal, but then he design'd him for a blessed and Glorious Immortality, and put it into his Power to obtain it. And both these are certainly Acts of great Grace and Goodness. But the Man makes himself Miserable by being Wicked. And if an Immortal Creature throws himself by his Sins into a state of Misery, he must, without a Miracle, be Miserable to all Eternity. But what has he then to complain of against his God? Was it a Fault to communicate to him a Being by Nature Immortal? He, who thereby enjoys Immortal Bliss, will

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never

never think so. Was it a Fault that God made his Happiness to depend on his Obedience and Holiness? This also had its Foundation in the Reason and Relation of Things. And having made him a free Agent, and with a Recompence sufficient amply to compensate all his Pains and all his Care, there can be nothing Unreasonable or Unrighteous in that. Or is it a Fault to execute his own Divine Ordinances and Sanctions, and that too, when founded on the Perfections of his Nature? No sure: For where the Sanction is eternally and essentially Righteous, the Execution of it must be so too. So that in a Word, the whole centers in this; God made Man a Creature by Nature Immortal and Everlasting, and with a Design that he should be eternally Blessed, and Happy, and Glorious; but Man by his Perverseness and impious Folly, in spite of all God's Righteous Care and kind Endeavours, makes himself Miserable; and being an Immortal Creature, he thereby becomes Miserable to all Eternity. His Immortality is in his Nature and Antecedent to his Punishment and Misery. His Condemna-

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demnation is only from his Sin. So that instead of complaining against the Severity of God, and charging him with Unrighteousness on this account, the proper Reflection to be made, is on the incorrigible Folly, and obstinate Hardiness, and irreclaimable Corruption and Naughtiness of wicked and ungodly Men, who in a monstrous Fondness to the Pleasures of Sin, and the Temptations of the World, will purchase 'em at so very dear and extravagant a Rate; will for the sake of such fading and transitory Joys continue still to be Wicked, altho' they must be Miserable to all Eternity.

And now, as we have seen all along, *The Close,* an exact Harmony in all this Scheme, and a most accurate Accommodation of it to the establish'd Rules of Righteousness and Justice, I think I can have no more to do upon this Subject, but to close all with remarking to you by way of Recapitulation, some of the singular and extraordinary Advantages to be observ'd in this way of saving Sinners, and making Mankind Happy, which cannot possibly be found in any other whatsoever, that

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was ever yet pretended to. Advantages, which as they are much for the Glory of God, and the Honour of his Divine Attributes, so must they in Consequence of that, tend much to the Confirmation of our Faith, and engage us to the more firm and steadfast Adherence to the Gospel. And they are these.

Serm.
VIII.
The Relation between Adam and Christ proves the Divine Authority of the Gospel.

I. The great and exact Agreement that in all this appears between *Adam* and Christ. *Adam* was the Covenant Head and Representative of all Mankind, and so was Christ. The one was the common Father of us all, from whom we are descended by Generation: The other is our Brother, to whom we are as nearly allied by his Participation of the same common Nature with us thro his mysterious Incarnation. The one under such a Covenant and Stipulation with Almighty God, in behalf not of himself alone, but of all his whole Posterity, as that the Fruits and Influence of his Actions extend themselves to all his Race. If he had kept himself Innocent and Pure, all Mankind had receiv'd the Benefit of it; and in his Immortality, all Mankind had

had been Immortal. But if he falls, all Mankind fall with him; and in, and by his single Disobedience, all Mankind come under the Sentence and the Power of Death. The other has so voluntarily put himself under the same Stipulation and Contract, as that the Advantages of his Performances may in a like manner extend to us.

Thus we have seen, it was that the Sin of *Adam* became the Sin of Human Nature. Thus also the Obedience of Christ becomes the Obedience of Human Nature; and the Satisfaction and Atonement of Christ, the Satisfaction and Atonement of Human Nature. Thus also the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead, and his glorious Victory and Triumph over Death, is the glorious Victory and Triumph of Mankind over the Prince of Darkness, and all the Powers of Hell; whereby the Fall and the Recovery, the Guilt and the Righteousness, the Mortality and the Everlasting Life of Human Nature, have proceeded all along so entirely by the same Rules of Justice, and in a Method so exactly Agreeable and Righteous, by the e-

1 Cor.

xv. 45.

Rom. v. 14

qual Influence of the several Actions and Performances of our Covenant Representative and Head, that on these very Considerations St. Paul calls Jesus Christ *the last Adam*, and Adam himself the *Figure of him that was to come*.

I mention this not only as a remarkable and eminent Instance of the Wisdom, and Goodness, and Justice, and Righteousness of God in this great Mysterious Dispensation; but also as it is altogether impossible, that so wonderful a Scheme, so exactly and regularly laid, so justly and completely fulfill'd, at so vast a distance of Time, by Persons of so distinguishing a Character, in which all Things are so accurately adapted, and correspond so nicely with each other, should come from any Hand, or any Head, from any Counsel, or any Power, but the Divine Counsel and Power of Almighty God; insomuch that upon a serious View, and impartial Reflection on the whole together, one can hardly wish for a better Evidence of the Truth and Divine Authority of the whole Christian Gospel, than to observe how all that Mysterious Redemption reveal'd

veal'd in it, has its Source from, and exactly corresponds with the three first Chapters of *Genesis*. It stands all upon the History there related, and the Promises there made, as upon a Rock, upon a firm and lasting Foundation that can never be mov'd.

And when in all our Argumentations on this Subject the Result is undeniably this, * that the Whole must either be an impious Forgery, or a Truth reveal'd from God, the utter Impossibility of Imposture and Deceit demonstrates that it must all be a Divine Contrivance and Dispensation of Almighty God our Heavenly Father.

All Impostures and Delusions, and all the deceitful Contrivances of wicked and ungodly Men, however assisted by the Wiles of Satan, and the Instigations of the Devil, must yet be all laid within the Compass of the Time and Age of the Contrivers of 'em, and without any considerable Retrospect to the Transactions of the Times before 'em. Or whenever any thing of this kind is pretended to, it is with such obvious Absurdities, and so preposterous a Disagreement, that the
gross

gross Delusion is palpable and visible to all Men. This is as evident as the Day itself in the *Turkish* Religion, the only great successful Imposture of this kind that ever was in the World. The whole Scheme of all *Mahomet's* Atchievements and Performances is laid at Home, and both begins and ends with the Person that sets up the Cheat. But the Case is quite otherwise in the great Mysterious Christian Dispensation: The Foundation of which is laid in *Adam*, altho' not finish'd till about Four Thousand Years after by Jesus Christ. So that the vast distance of Time between the Beginning and the End of this regular Scheme, and most wonderful Contrivance, and especially when view'd with all its intermediate Predictions and Prophecies, Types and Figurative Representations, which like a directing Hand point from the one to the other, and which as a continu'd Chain, have extended from first to last, and by which God prepar'd the Minds of Men for so stupendous a Mystery, shews how impossible it is that it should come from any other Hand, or from any other Power, than that

that of Him alone, who is the *First and the Last, the Alpha and the Omega*, the Beginning and the End of all Things. And to pretend that such a Dispensation as this, is only Imposture and Delusion, is in effect to say, that *Adam and Abraham, and Moses and David*, and the Prophets have all conspir'd with *John Baptist, and Jesus Christ*, and his Apostles to impose a new Religion on the World. And I think, that nothing needs be added to set forth the ridiculous Absurdity of the Pretence, and the obstinate Impiety, as well as the invincible Folly of those that make it.

2. Another great Advantage in Christianity is, that it shews us plainly that God does nothing Arbitrarily in the Business of our Salvation, but that all our Hopes and Fears, and all our Expectations from him, and especially as to the World to come, are founded on Fixt, Establish'd, Eternal and Unchangeable Rules of Righteousness. And I scarce know any one Principle that is more to the Glory of God, and to the Honour of our Religion, more to the Encouragement and Consolation of all good Men, and indeed that tends more

more to the Conviction and Reformation of the Wicked, than this of ours, when well consider'd and rightly understood. For with how much Eagerness soever some Men may insist on God's pardoning Sin by a meer Despotick Power and Arbitrary Will, I have
 § Serm. II. shewn at large * above, that no such Thing can possibly have place with God, unless we will allow not only Religion itself and all its Laws, but also the Salvation and Damnation of Men to be wholly and solely from a Principle of meer Arbitrary Power, rather than from any certain Principles of Essential Goodness, or any determinate Laws of Natural Justice. And how extravagant and uncomfortable an Opinion is this?

If there be no determinate and unchangeable Principles of Goodness, no establish'd Laws of Natural Justice and Righteousness, according to which Almighty God administers all his Providences, and contrives all his Dispensations; then we can never have any certain or useful Notions of his Justice and his Goodness. And tho' we call him a *Righteous God*, and are taught to believe, that *there is none*
good

good but God; yet if there be no Real, and Essential, and Unchangeable Principles of Righteousness and Goodness, we can never know what those Expressions mean. At most, we can then mean no more by 'em than this, that God does what he will; and what he thus wills and does, is therefore Good, because he wills and does it. And when we say that *God can do no Evil*, according to that Principle we can intend no more by it, than that every Thing which God does is therefore Good, because done by him, be it never so Disagreeable in it self, never so Deplorable in its Consequences.

And if this be allow'd, how very much does it Diminish and Blemish the Glory of his Character, by bringing his Goodness, Justice and Holiness to nothing? And they are but meer empty Names, if they have no Relation to the Nature of Things, nor any certain Signification. At this rate I must needs own indeed, that after all the seeming Solemnity of the Divine Laws and Sanctions, Promises and Threatenings, sacred Covenants and Stipulations of Almighty God, he
may

may yet, if he will, so alter his Purpose, that the very worst of Sinners, notwithstanding all the seeming Severity of his Laws, may be sav'd. And this, I confess, would be a very comfortable Principle to all wicked and ungodly Men; and, if it were true, would give 'em much greater Hope than what the Christian Gospel does allow of. But as this is the only Principle upon which an Arbitrary Remission of Sins by a meer Exercise of Dominion and Power can have place, so the mischievous Consequences of all this shew how ridiculously Absurd, and extravagantly Unreasonable all such Expectations are.

For if you go thus far, the very same Principles must carry you farther; and with the same Force of Truth and Reason will prove, that God might, if he would, have made Virtue Vice, and Vice Virtue; might have commanded us to Blaspheme, rather than to Honour him; to be Cruel, and Sensual, and Devilish, instead of Merciful, Pure and Holy; and at the last, not only to save from Destruction the Wicked, Impenitent, Profane, Sensual Sinner, but even to convey such
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to the Glories of an Heavenly State, when the Meek, the Humble, the Chast, the Pure, the Temperate should be sentenc'd to everlasting Burnings with the Devil and his Angels.—

This, as strangely Odd as it sounds; and as Absurd and as Disagreeable as it seems to all our common Ideas of the Righteousness, Goodness, Justice and Holiness of God, must be allow'd the natural and inevitable Consequence of such a Principle. And all the Salvation and Damnation of Mankind must thus be resolv'd into the meer Arbitrary Will, and Pleasure, and Power of God, if such a Doctrin be admitted and set up.

Nor will it at all avail to pretend that God exercises this his Power in pardoning the Penitent alone. For if the Difference between Good and Evil be not Real and Unchangeable, Repentance itself is as Indifferent as Arbitrary, and as changeable an Institution as any of the rest, and may as easily and with as much Reason be dispens'd with and set aside. And the Whole, both as to Virtue and Vice, as to Duty and Sin, as to Rewards and Punishments, as to the Salvation
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and Damnation of Mankind, resolves itself into, and centers all in the changeable, uncertain, Arbitrary Will of the Supreme, if there be not some certain, fixt, eternal and indispensable Principles of Righteousness and Justice, according to which God governs the World, and unchangeably bestows both Rewards and Punishments.——

And according to such Opinions and Notions, what shall we make of the Attributes of God? Or what the certain Ground of our Fears, or Hope, or of any of our Expectations?

But on the other hand, if Good and Evil are Things real, and fixt, and certain, as having an Eternal Foundation in the Nature of the unchangeable God, and in a certain Resemblance of, or Relation to him, then the Reverse of all these Things will be found so plain and evident, that a meer Arbitrary Remission of Sins cannot be possible. For the Consequence of these Principles must be, that this Difference is the true Foundation and Reason of all his Laws, and the Rule of all his Dispensations. Thus he certainly forbids Sin, and punishes it, because he hates it; and he therefore
hates

hates it, because it's absolutely disagreeable and contrary to his Nature. He therefore commands and countenances Virtue: He therefore blesses the Good, and promises to reward them, because he loves Virtue, as naturally agreeable and hugely delightful to him.

And in this Principle, when we say, that *God is Good, and hateth Evil*, every Body knows what we mean. Every Body knows we mean that God guides himself in all his Actions and Dispensations, according to the fixt Rules of Goodness, and the establish'd Principles of Justice; the Notions and Idea's of which in our Minds, make up a very great part of the Divine Image and Similitude to God, after which we are said at our first Creation to have been made. And that in any Action, or any Dispensation towards his Creatures, he can no more recede from these Reasons, or act contrary to these Obligations, for so I must call the Principles of this Difference, than he can Die, or deny himself, or cease to be what he is. Accordingly in these certain

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Rules and establish'd Principles of Righteousness, we see the Reasonableness of God's Laws, and the Necessity of putting them in Execution. They are given and enacted, because good; and they are observ'd and executed, because necessary to God's Glory and to our Felicity. And this is the true Principle of all our Hopes and Fears, as it is the true Reason of all Punishments and Rewards. And in regard to these Laws and Rules, God will no more save a Sinner in a state of Sin, than he will destroy a Righteous Man in his Innocence and Integrity. For these Reasons he can no more *destroy the Righteous with the Wicked,* or by sparing the impenitent Sinner *make the Righteous to be as the Wicked,* than he can make Light to be Darkness, and Darkness to be Light.

But as the same God, who is the Fountain of all Goodness, is also the Fountain of all true Felicity and Bliss, there springs from hence such an eternal and inseparable Relation between Holiness and Happiness, between Sin and Misery, that in the
Nature

Nature of Things, as well as in the unchangeable Decrees of God, the Righteous shall be Happy, and the Wicked shall be Miserable. These are all of 'em plain, and certain, and necessary Consequences. And as these are the Principles and Reasons to an Holy God, of all his Dispensations, and of all his Judgments, so are they the true Grounds of all our Hope and Comfort, of all our Fears and Terrors. With a Holy God the Holy only can be Happy, the Wicked must be Miserable. And as this is that Fundamental Principle of Righteousness, which has been shewn to be the true Foundation of all his Laws and Precepts, of all his Commands and Injunctions against Sin, so is it also such an Eternal Rule, such an unchangeable Guide and Standard in all his Judgments, that there can be no room to hope for Mercy and Pardon by the Exercise of a meer Arbitrary Power and Right, contrary to these Eternal Principles and Obligations.

The Wisdom of God,

And as the whole Scheme of our Christian Redemption stands upon this Foot, is built upon this Ground, proceeds upon these very Principles, and is all intended only to administer Grace, Mercy and Favour to Sinners in a way of Righteousness, and on such Conditions as may suit best with the Eternal Rules of Wisdom, Justice, Goodness, Righteousness, Holiness and Truth; nothing in Nature can be more directly opposite to a meer Arbitrary Remission by the Exercise of meer Arbitrary Power and Right. And therefore it was certainly without Thought, and with great Rashness and Inconsideration, and from most powerful Prejudice and Disaffection, that such a Religion as this was represented as unreasonable and unworthy of Almighty God; in that nothing can be more for his Glory, or a greater Honour to our Holy Profession, nothing can more set forth its Excellencies, nothing can be more comfortable to all wise and good Men, or tend more naturally to the Conviction of the Wicked, than thus to find, even in the very Reasons and Principles of our Redemption,

demption, that there is nothing Arbitrary in Christianity: But that as all its Laws, Precepts and Commands are grounded on the Eternal Rules of Righteousness and Goodness, so are all its Promises and Threatnings, and all our Expectations from them; insomuch that as no Man perishes merely because God would have it so, but because his own wilful Wickedness and Vice, in the Reason, Nature and Relation of Things, is an invincible Bar to his being Happy; so on the other hand, no Man can reasonably hope and expect to be sav'd by the mere Arbitrary Will and Power of the Supreme, contrary to the Eternal Laws and Principles of Righteousness. And therefore,

3. From hence also I must observe again, that on this very account that the Christian Dispensation better supports the Honour of God by consulting and preserving the Harmony of his Divine Attributes and Perfections, than any other Religion or Principle whatsoever. It exhibits Mercy and Pardon, and Reconciliation, and Favour to Sinners to the

The Harmony of the Divine Attributes set forth in our Redemption.

greatest Degree, and with the greatest Consolation imaginable, and yet in such a Way, and on such Conditions, as well consist with the Honour of his Holiness, the Justice of his Government, the sacred Authority of his Laws against Sin, and the Glory of all his Divine Perfections. And, as I have already shewn at large, that the great Reason and Necessity of an Atonement and Expiation proceeded wholly from this Consideration, That the Glory of God's Divine Attributes, and the Wisdom and Justice of his Government might be consulted by some such remarkable Punishment of Sin, as might be sufficient to attest his Abhorrence of it, and his just Displeasure against it; and which, I think, all the Wisdom of Mankind cannot provide for in any other Way, or by any other Means so conspicuously, so advantageously, as is done in that Expiation which the Gospel sets forth by the Blood of Christ; so I cannot but think it of the greatest Moment and Importance both to the Honour of God, and the Good of Mankind, that this Delightful, Harmonious Con-

sent

sent of the Divine Attributes should be continually and universally preserv'd, and shine bright thro' all his Dispensations.

Men form their Notions and Apprehensions of God, according to the Discoveries of this kind, that they are able to make. It is therefore to the Advantage of his Character, that *Mercy and Truth should meet together, and Righteousness and Peace* be reconcil'd and united in all his Judgments and Dealings with us. It makes all our Expectations of Mercy the more reasonable, the better grounded, and the more safely to be rely'd on, and with a juster Confidence, when we find his Hatred and Abhorrence of Sin, his just Vengeance and Displeasure against it at the same time as visible and distinguishing as his tender Mercy and Compassion to the Sinner. And both these are very remarkable in the bitter Passion of the Crucify'd Jesus.

If ever any one of the Divine Attributes should be suppos'd to prevail against, and to gain the Ascendant over the rest, it would not only be a Blemish to the Glory of

God, in whom all Perfections infinitely and equally dwell, but it must also have very mischievous and fatal Influences upon Mankind. For instance, if we let our Thoughts dwell on his Infinite Mercy and Goodness, and do not balance our Expectations by our Apprehensions of his Just and Righteous Vengeance, it is almost impossible to express into what heights of Vanity and Presumption, mistaken Confidence, and ill-grounded Hope Men will run. They will live in the constant and habitual Practice of the vilest Sins, and yet at last expect to wipe off the Guilt of all, and to prevent the Danger, by a meer Lord have Mercy upon me at their Death.

On the other hand, if we reflect on the Righteous Vengeance and severe Indignation of that tremendous God, whose Judgments are Terrible, and whose Displeasure is as a Consuming Fire; Good God! How must all the Nations of the Earth tremble, and be dismay'd, to behold the Terrors of the Lord set in array against them? And unless supported by some reasonable and well-grounded

grounded Expectations of Mercy and Favour, how must they in these fearful Apprehensions of Divine Wrath, sink into the last Extremities of sad Disconsolation and black Despair? And under the just Terrors, and bitter Remorse of a guilty Conscience for any heinous and flagitious Iniquity, such as Murder, Adultery, Blasphemy, or the like; it deserves to be well consider'd, what sound Comfort our Modern Apostates with their Antichristian Notions and Principles can administer.

They will tell you, that God's *The Deists* Mercy is sufficient for his Justice, and chief Prin-
that he is as much inclin'd to Pity as ciple no
to Punish. Well, be it so; but what just Foun-
do they mean, or what do they dation of
expect from all this? Do they mean, Hope.
that God is entirely at Liberty whether he will punish Men their Sins or no, and absolutely free either to shew Mercy, or to execute Vengeance meerly of his Arbitrary Will and Pleasure, without being determin'd by the Reason of Things, and the Merit of their Actions this way or that, let their Detestable,
Enor-

Enormous Abominations be never so great? This, I must beg leave to say, cannot be granted them. Such a Principle cannot consist with the Holiness, and Essential Righteousness and Justice of Almighty God; nor be true, if there be any fixt and certain Principles of Virtue, Goodness and Holiness in the World. For if there be such, they must be the determinate Rules and Principles by which God directs himself in all his Counsels, Providences and Dispensations. The universal Righteousness and Rectitude of the Divine Nature consists in this very Thing; and he could not be a Just and an Holy God, if he did otherwise.

And as we have seen that this is the true Ground and Principle of his Legislature, of his Laws and his Promises, and of all his Denunciations against Sin; so consequently the Punishment is as necessary as the Prohibition of it; and can no more in Righteousness dispense absolutely with the one, than he was originally at Liberty not to have decreed the other: No more at Liberty

berty, in regard to his Justice and Truth, absolutely and entirely to supersede all Punishment of Sin, than he was at first not to have made any Laws. For he governs us by the same Reasons and Principles in both. And thus far I am sure that the disconsolate Sinner will meet with little Comfort, in remarking that *God's Mercy is sufficient for his Justice*. It can give no Hope of an universal, or unconditional Pardon, nor does it at all set forth either for what Sins, or on what Conditions, Pardon and Mercy are to be expected. So far from it, that indeed this their favourable Principle on which they would build their Hope, may be turn'd upon 'em, and falls with equal Force at least the other way; and has as much Power to destroy, as to support Mens Expectations: For, if *God's Mercy is sufficient for his Justice*, so is his *Justice for his Mercy*. And why should he not then be as much inclin'd to Punish, as either to Pity or to Pardon? For let us consider what are the moving Reasons that seem to determine him either way. He pardons
out

out of a tender Regard to the Miseries, and Sufferings, and Sorrows of his Creatures: Of his sinful Creatures, and out of Pity to the Unhappiness which they have brought upon themselves by their Sins. And he punishes out of his just Displeasure at their Wickedness, and in a strict Regard to Himself and his Honour, and the sacred Authority of his Laws. His Mercy therefore, we see, proceeds from a Concernment for his Creatures, but his Vengeance from a Concernment for Himself and his own Glory. And which way now shall poor Mortals determine their Expectations? When they consider his Pity, it gives Hope; when they remember his Justice and tremendous Indignation, and these necessary to vindicate the Honour of his Perfections, it raises the utmost height of Terror, and it's well if it does not sink Men into the last Extremities of Despair. For altho' I cannot doubt but that God is always ready to shew as much Mercy to his Creatures as can be consistent with his Honour, with the Righteousness of his Government, and

and the universal Rectitude of his Nature, yet, when it comes to this unhappy Dilemma, that he must forego his Regard either to his Creatures, or to his own Glory and Perfections, we may certainly depend upon it, that he *who made all Things for himself*, will act consistently with himself, and in a just regard to his Glory, tho' all his Creatures perish. So far then as the Mercy of God can appear consistent with his Wisdom and Justice, and Truth and Holiness, and with the sacred Authority of his Laws, so far to be sure it's not unreasonable to expect it. But if we go beyond this, we break thro' all Bounds and Limits, we run into the other Extreme, and we exalt our Expectations from his Mercy to such an extravagant Heighth, as to give Countenance to the vainest Presumption of impenitent Sinners, and absolutely to destroy the Necessity of an Holy Life.

Prov. xvi.
4.

And altho' I know that Repentance is again here insisted on as sufficient to solve the Difficulty, yet if we set aside the Holy Scripture,
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the Promises there made, and the Reasons and Principles there reveal'd, I may safely defie any Man alive, whatever may be his Wit and Judgment, and deep Penetration, to discover and set forth upon good and certain Grounds, what and whose those Sins are that God will pardon, and upon what Degrees of Humiliation, and Sorrow, and Contrition he will vouchsafe his Mercy. It is, I think, only the Evangelical Doctrine of a Crucify'd Jesus, who by bearing the Punishment of our Sins, and suffering in our stead, and by satisfying the Reasons and Purposes of the Divine Justice and Vengeance, has consulted the Honour of God, and kept up the sacred Authority of his Laws, has also made that Mercy both Reasonable, and Glorious, which otherwise had not been so: And who, by a new Covenant in his Blood, has given us a Promise, and a full Assurance of Pardon to all Sins upon Repentance. Without which new Covenant it would and must have puzz'd the Wisest, and the Greatest, and the Best of Men, to have given great
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and habitual Sinners a good and certain Assurance that Sorrow and Contrition would avail to their Everlasting Happiness. And after all their specious Reasonings and pretended Guesses, there would have been found Thousands and Thousands of Instances, in which Repentance alone without a Mediator, would have been no better thought of, than our Adversaries themselves pretend to think of it in *David's* Case. And whatever they could have said from the tender Mercy of God to the Sufferings of his miserable Creatures, which, Blessed be his Name, will admit of a great deal, yet any tolerable Sense of his Natural Justice, and Essential Holiness, as the Foundation of his Laws, and the Principle of his Judgments, must leave every great and scandalous habitual Sinner, notwithstanding all his deepest Contrition and penitential Sorrow, under very great Uncertainties, and jealous, anxious Fears, as to his Everlasting Peace and Happiness.

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Let vain Men therefore pretend what they will, it is owing to the Satisfaction of thy most precious Blood, O Blessed Jesus, and to the Punishment of our Sins in thy meritorious Death and Passion, by which the Honour of God is consulted, and the Glory of his Character preserv'd, that our Hope of Mercy, and Reconciliation, and Eternal Life, becomes reasonable and well-grounded. And Men have so little Reason to accuse this our Christian Dispensation as unworthy of God, or in any measure derogatory to his Glory on this account, that I do not know of any one Action, or Providence, or Contrivance whatsoever, that I ever yet heard of, from the first Creation of the World, in which the Divine Wisdom, and Goodness, and Justice, and Mercy, and Truth, are so harmoniously united, and shine with so beautiful and advantageous a Lustre, as in this of the Salvation of Mankind by Jesus Christ. I have been the longer upon this Head, in that it comes up so very close to the main Objection brought against Christianity from
this

this Quarter, and eminently discovers the Glory of God, and some of the greatest Excellencies of our Religion, in those very Instances in which its Adversaries pretend to find the contrary.

4. Another great Advantage in this Doctrin of our Redemption is, ^{Christ's} ^{Death for} that for the further Confirmation ^{us the} of our Hope, it gives us the great- ^{greatest} ^{Evidence} ^{of God's} ^{Love.} est Assurances imaginable of God's Love to us, and of his unfeigned Desire of our Happiness and Salvation that can possibly be had. What can be greater, than when we were Slaves to Sin, and *Children of Wrath*, to receive us into Favour, to give us *the Adoption of Sons*, to make us *the Children of God*, and *Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven*? What can be greater, than to deliver us from the Chambers of Death, and the Powers of Hell, and the barbarous Insults of the Devil and his Infernal Fiends, and to bring us again into Fellowship and Communion with God, and even to a Participation of his Divine and Holy Nature? And

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all these Things the Gospel promises as Privileges, and Benefits, and great Advantages that we receive here on Earth by the Redemption of Jesus Christ.

But the most wonderful and unparallel'd Indications of Divine Condescension and Love, are seen in the Person by whom, and in the Means thro' which this Expiation of our Sins was made, and this Redemption wrought: When neither Men nor Angels could be capable of so great a Work; not Men, because all included in a state of Sin, and so unfit to become a Ransom for Sinners; not Angels, as not able to conquer the Powers of Death and Hell. When none else was capable of accomplishing so great a Work, and all Mankind must have perish'd in their Sins for want of it, Almighty God of the Greatness of his tender Pity and infinite Compassion, sent down from Heaven his only begotten Son, the Son of his Love, *the Heir of all Things, the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image*

Heb. i. 2.

Image of the Invisible God, to be our Saviour. And is there nothing worthy of our Wonder, and our serious Contemplation in all this? Is this a trifling and unreasonable Dispensation? It cannot sure be pretended unworthy of God, when it appears all along to have proceeded wholly from a strict Regard to his Honour in the Administration of his Mercy. And it cannot but be very agreeable to, and worthy of all Acceptation among Men, when it gives so incontestable an Indication of God's great Affection and loving Kindness to us. To come down from Heaven, and by a wonderful and mysterious Incarnation to live among us, was, as the first, so one of the least Instances of his great Condescension and Love. When thus Incarnate, to live among us a poor and a miserable Life, in a mean Condition and low Estate, and of no Reputation, under a narrow and a scanty Fortune, in Infamy and Reproaches, being continually Scorn'd and Revil'd, Scandaliz'd and Blasphem'd,

phem'd, Despis'd and set at naught among his Brethren: To be falsely Accus'd, maliciously Condemn'd, Spit upon, Buffeted, Crucify'd, and in one Word, to Die on the Cross in all the Miseries and Sorrows, in all the Anguish and Torments that so Vile and Infamous, so Barbarous and Cruel a Death could be attended with; and all this as the Punishment and Atonement of our Sins, and to make way by that Atonement for such Exercise of his Mercy to us as he could not otherwise so Righteously have exhibited, nor we so reasonably have accepted: This is what the New Testament deservedly sets forth as a most singular and extraordinary Manifestation of the Goodness and Love of God to Mankind.

Joh.iii.16. *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life. Herein God*

Rom.v.8. *commendeth his Love to us, in that when we were yet Sinners Christ died for us. God, who is rich in Mercy, for the great Love wherewith he loved*

Eph. ii.
4. 5.

us,

in the Redemption of Man. 261

us; when we were dead in Sins, hath quickned us together with Christ. Hereby perceive we the Love of God, ^{1 Joh. iii. 16.} *because he laid down his Life for us. In this was manifested the Love of God to us, because he sent his only Begotten* ^{iv. 9, 10.} *Son into the World, that we might live thro' him. Here is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins. And such a Revelati-on, when strongly attested, and wonderfully confirm'd by the best and most undeniable Evidence, can never fure be unwelcome, or ungrateful to Mankind, and there-fore ought not to be trifled with. And especially when it shall be consider'd, that even all this has been, and will be found little e-nough to give some Men a good Assurance, that the Greatness of their Sins shall certainly be for-given them. In short, this won-derful and mysterious Dispensation, which the profane Scorners, walking* ^{2Pet. iii. 3;} *after their own Lusts, so reproach-fully despise, as on the one hand it consults the Honour of God, and*

Eph. i. 6.

is very much to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace, in setting forth his Wisdom, Goodness, Justice, Truth, Holiness and Mercy ; so is it on the other equally for the Benefit and Consolation of Mankind, in exhibiting the plainest and most certain Demonstrations of his unfeigned Love, and sincere Desires, and solicitous Endeavours for our Happiness. But to conclude,

The Christian Religion does most promote Holiness and Virtue.

5. *Lastly.* Our Christian Doctrine of Redemption by the Blood of Christ, and of Pardon of Sin by his Mediation, as it has its Foundation in the establish'd Principles of Natural Justice and Righteousness, founded in the Nature of God, and in an essential Difference between Good and Evil, it must go farther than any other Religion, or any other Principles can go, to convince Mankind of the fatal Influence of Sin, and of the indispensable Necessity of true Repentance, and of a Religious Holy Life. I do not speak now, you see, only of the Influence of its Promises and Threatenings, and the

the natural Tendency of its general Doctrins to perswade Men to be Good and Virtuous. The bringing *Life and Immortality to Light* by a clearer and fuller Revelation, by ^{2 Tim. i. 10.} more certain Proofs and Assurances of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments after Death: By the undoubted Certainty of a future Resurrection from the Dead, built on the Certainty of the Resurrection of Christ, and a Judgment to come, and to be executed by that same Jesus who once came down to be our Saviour: By the gracious Promises of Everlasting Bliss and Glory in the Presence of God, and in the Kingdom of Heaven, where all that are Good and Holy shall *shine like* ^{Mat. xiii. 43.} *the Sun in the Kingdom of the Father*, have Everlasting Rest and Peace, *a Fulness of Joy, and Rivers* ^{Psal. xvi. 11.} *of Pleasure for evermore*: And again, by the dreadful Denunciation of everlasting Burnings, and endless Torments in Hell Fire, prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels, where the Wicked are to live

for ever, and to Houl, and Lament, and Mourn and be Afflicted even with very great Distress, during the long Continuance of an endless Eternity. In Consideration of all which, St. Paul calls the Gospel of Christ, *the Power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth*, and in which respect the Christian Religion is more Excellent, and has better Arguments, and a much greater Force than any other in the World besides, to engage Men to be Good.

Rom.i.16.

*Especially
in the Do-
ctrin of our
Redemption.*

But this, I say, however Great, and Valuable, and Extraordinary, is not all that I here aim at. I more particularly intend at present, the Influence which the Doctrine of our Redemption by the Blood of Christ, and the Eternal Principles of Righteousness on which 'tis founded, has, to confirm all the Promises and Threatenings of the Gospel; to settle our Apprehensions and Expectations according to them; and above all other Things whatsoever, to convince us of the indispensable Necessity of such

such an Holy Life, as is preach'd from it. And this will be seen in some good measure from that one single Principle which I mention'd in the beginning as naturally resulting from God's Original Decree, and which was indeed the first Help to us in discovering the absolute and indispensable Necessity of our Redemption: I mean this, that a State of Sin, and a State of Happiness and Immortality are utterly incompatible.

The Necessity of our Redemption, and the want of a Saviour, I have all along shewn you, proceeds from this one plain and certain Principle. And all the Aim and End of Christ's Mediation and Atonement, is only to deliver us from a State of Sin, and to restore us to a State of Righteousness, in a method of Justice, and in a way agreeable to the Truth and Holiness, and other glorious Perfections of our God, that we might thereby become capable of Happiness and Immortality. So that no one Principle can more plainly demonstrate

strate the inevitable Danger and Misery of a sinful State, and the absolute Necessity of Holiness to the Complete and Eternal Felicity of Mankind.

*Not so the
Principles
of Deism.*

Not so the Doctrin of an Arbitrary Remission of Sins, which some Men so zealously contend for: For where the whole depends, not on the determinate Reason of Things, nor on any unchangeable Principles of Natural Righteousness and Goodness, but only on the meer Arbitrary Will and changeable Pleasure of the Supreme, there is no necessary Regard to be had to the Actions of Men, but as his Will makes the Law, so his Law and Determination either way makes the Reason. And thus indeed that may be Reasonable and Righteous to Day, which will not be so to Morrow; if he who to Day makes a Law, a Covenant, an Ordinance or a Decree, to Morrow shall think fit to repeal and supersede it. At this rate there can be no fixt and certain Principles of Man's being either Happy or Miserable, but all depends

depends only on the uncertain, unknown, and undetermin'd Will of the Supreme. Where he will recede from his Right, Men may be Happy; and where he will not, they must be Miserable, let the Actions of Men be what they will, Good or Bad.

And where then is the Necessity of a Holy Life, or how can any such Necessity be prov'd? According to these Mens Notions, it can be neither Unreasonable nor Unrighteous to pardon the worst of Sins, and the vilest of Sinners, and that too without any manner of Relenting or Contrition, any penitential Sorrow or Humiliation: For his Will must be Absolute, and his Dominion Incontrollable.——

But then what does it signify how any Man lives? For as God has without all question an Absolute Right over us, so if he may reasonably, and righteously, and consistently with his Justice and Truth exercise that Sovereign Right in an Arbitrary Remission of all Sin, I do not see, upon these Principles,
I say,

I say, but that it would be reasonable and becoming us to expect it from him. For I must confess myself to have such an Opinion of his Goodness and his Love to Mankind, that from so kind and gracious a Father we have all the reason in the World to expect and depend upon all the Mercy and Grace, and Favour and Happiness that he can in a due regard to himself, and to the Glory of his Attributes exhibit. Vengeance and Punishment are chiefly useful to support the Character of these. And in truth if there was not this Necessity for them, I cannot see but that the worst of Sinners might be safe. And then what useless and insignificant Things would Religion and Obedience be? What does it signify how any Man lives, if all his Hope depends at last on the Absolute Will of the Supreme Judge, and that Will is not determin'd by any necessary Principles of Natural Justice, but is absolutely free from all such Regards, and entirely at Liberty, without any Blemish

Blemish to its Righteousness, to save or to condemn at Pleasure? At this rate the worst of Sinners would certainly be sav'd. This is the Consequence of an Absolute and Arbitrary Remission of Sins, and I think it is apparently destructive of all our Obligations to Holiness and Virtue.

If it should be pretended that however God is at liberty to exercise, or to recede from his Right, yet that he will most certainly pass Sentence according to his Laws, and Constitutions, and Decrees, I must beg leave to ask. How does that appear? Or where are those Laws and Constitutions to be found? By the Light of Nature we have but very little, and that too uncertain Knowledge of these Things. Is it then from the Books of Holy Scripture? If it be, this looks at the last, and after all that has been pretended to the contrary, as tho' there was some real Expediency in, and some valuable Advantage to be expected from Divine Revelation. But in what Parts of the
Holy

Holy Scripture are such settled Laws to be found? In the Old Testament the Decree runs, *Do this and thou shalt live.* That is, it promises its Rewards only to an absolute and entire Obedience. This therefore is that Law which *has included all under Sin*, and by which is *the Knowledge of Sin*, and which was most particularly intended to convince us that we are *all Guilty before God.* And therefore, if this be the Law by which Almighty God will determine himself, it is a Law of Fear and Terror, but not of Hope.

Gal. iii. 22.
Rom. xx.
19, 20.

Is it then the Gospel of Christ by which God will judge us? It is so, indeed, to us Christians especially. And this is that Gospel which we Preach, and which the Men with whom we have now to do, Disdain, and Scorn, and Reject on this very account, as threatening everlasting Damnation to their Sins and Vices, and giving no Hope to Sinners from a meer Arbitrary Power, but setting forth such fixt Rules of Justice, and establish'd

stablish'd Principles of Righteousness and Religion, as even demonstrate the Necessity of Holiness to our Happiness. And I am mightily confirm'd in my Opinion of the Reasonableness, and Truth and Excellency of these Principles, when the more we examine and reflect upon those Notions and Opinions which our Adversaries advance in opposition to them, the more we find them thwarting our common Sentiments of the Perfections of God, buoying up wicked and ungodly Men with vain deceitful Expectations, and destroying the Necessity of a Religious and an Holy Life.

Not so the Gospel of the Blessed Jesus, nor the Doctrin of our Redemption by his Blood; in that the direct Repugnancy between Sin and Happiness, between a state of Sin and a state of Immortality, which appears to have been the true Ground of our Redemption, and of the Necessity of it to our Salvation, demonstrates above all Things the absolute Necessity of
Holi-

Holiness, that we may be Happy.

Sin, which from the Beginning was, still is, and will be to all Eternity, a certain Bar to the Happiness of Mankind. If we are Sinners, we must be Miserable: If in a state of Sin, we must be also in a state of Misery and Death, obnoxious to Vengeance, Wrath and Torments. This God decreed before the Foundations of the World were laid, and the Nature of Things requires it. And an Ordinance that is thus Everlasting and Unchangeable in its Nature, as founded in the Eternal Reason and Relation of Things, must have its Force and Obligation as well after our Redemption as before it. He therefore that is still a Sinner, must still be Miserable, and perish in his Iniquities. All that even this Expiation and Redemption by the Death of Christ pretends to, is only to save us by delivering us from a state of Sin, that we might become capable of Mercy; and thereby to remove that great Obstacle
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and Incapacity that we were under, by Sin, to Happiness. And for this Reason Repentance is made the necessary and indispensable Condition of it. But then he that will not be deliver'd from his Sins when he may; he that will not forsake them when God has put it into his Power; he that will still commit them, and still continue in them, and hates to be Reform'd, he sees in this one single Principle how certain and inevitable his everlasting Misery and Ruin must needs be. A Sinner, whether Redeem'd, or not Redeem'd, must be Miserable, because a state of Sin and an happy Immortality are absolutely Repugnant and Incompatible. This is a Principle that establishes the Necessity of a Religious and Holy Life, upon such an everlasting Foundation as can never be remov'd.

And which is very considerable in this Case, it leaves no dispensing Power, no not even to God himself, beyond the fixt Rules and Laws of Natural Justice and Righteousness.

No dispensing Power with God.

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*Hunc autem semper
consequitur
Iustitia
ultrix in
eos qui
deficiunt a
lege divina.
Iren. l. 3.
c. 45.*

teousness. But as all his Laws against Sin have their Foundation in the very Perfections of his own Nature, and it was not an *Indifferent Thing* with him, whether he would forbid Evil by them or no, so neither is it whether he will execute them by taking Vengeance on Sinners. But the Punishment of Sin becomes as absolutely necessary as the Prohibition of it. The one is as Essential to his Justice, as the other can be to his Holiness. And as a Dislike and Detestation of Sin cannot be more properly shewn before it is committed, than in solicitous Endeavours by Laws and Precepts, by Prohibitions and Threatnings to prevent it; so neither can they after the Commission of it by any thing better than by the Fruits of God's Displeasure in a just Severity of Punishments; which single Reflection shews, that as the Laws and Commands of the Gospel are not trifling and indifferent Appointments, intended only to enslave and enthrall Mankind with undeserv'd Strictness and Arbitrary

bitrary Rigour, but the establish'd Offices of Essential Righteousness, and as such, of Indispensable and Eternal Obligation; so neither are the severe Threatnings of Vengeance, nor the dreadful Denunciations of Hell Torments, so often to be met with in the New Testament, the empty Feints of undetermin'd Justice, intended to Bugbear and Frighten Men from the Delights and Pleasures that they might otherwise quietly and reasonably enjoy, but most Righteous and equitable Decrees, and as such, the eternal Counsels and unchangeable Purposes of a Just, a Wise, a Pure and Holy God; such as he decreed to Govern us by, and to judge us by, before the Foundations of the World were laid; and will never recede from, no not when those Foundations shall be destroy'd: *Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but one jot, or one tittle of this Word, of these sacred and solemn Laws, of these Divine Sanctions and Decrees, shall never pass away; but all shall be*

Mat. v. 18.

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fulfill'd. The Execution of such a Law is as Reasonable, as Necessary and as Indispensable as the enacting of it. Both have their Foundation in the Holiness of God, and are not only Reasonable, but Necessary, indispensably Necessary to vindicate his Honour, and to assert the Wisdom and the Justice of his Government.

In a Word, as the whole Doctrine of our Christian Redemption by Christ proceeds upon this Foot, and only proceeds so far as to obtain Mercy and Salvation for us, on the Conditions of Repentance and Faith in Christ, in whose Name it is Preach'd, thro' whose Merits and Mediation it is accepted, and without which no Expiation could avail us; nothing in Nature can, I think, go farther to convince us of our indispensable Obligations to this necessary Duty, nor indeed have greater Influence to persuade us to set about it; without which all our Hope comes to nothing, and Man must as certainly Perish, as he could have done if
Christ

Christ had never Died. An impenitent, wilful Sinner is still as much and as certainly in a state of Sin and Damnation, as he was, or ever could have been without any such Expiation or Atonement: *Without Repentance all must Perish.*

Thus you see that every thing in this Religion, its Precepts, its Promises, its Threatnings, its Doctrines, the mysterious Work of our Redemption, and all the Principles on which 'tis founded, and by which it is best to be accounted for, and the Conditions too on which the Benefits of it are exhibited, do all of them with one Consent recommend Virtue and Goodness as necessary to our Happiness, do set forth the Danger and the Mischief of Sin, as inevitably tending to our everlasting Ruin and Destruction, and do much more than any other Religion or Principles whatsoever to persuade Men to be good, by offering better Evidences, and more certain Proofs, that *without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord.*

And now, when all these Things shall be laid together, and it shall at last most manifestly appear, that our Christian Doctrin of Salvation by the Death of Christ, and the Expiation of his Blood, is grounded on sounder and better Principles, and proceeds upon juster and wiser Reasonings, is much more agreeable to the best of our Notions of the Divine Attributes, better establishes our Belief both of God's Holiness and Justice, is much more for his Honour in reconciling the Harmony of his Divine and Adorable Perfections, and is eminently much more both for the Consolation and Instruction, and Conviction of Mankind, than any other Principles which our Adversaries can set up; when, I say, both the Glory of God, and the Comfort of Men are found very visible and conspicuous in those very Instances in which our Adversaries pretended to have spy'd the contrary, it must, I hope, be granted me, what I asserted in the beginning, *viz.* That the Pretences and

and Objections brought by those Men against the Christian Religion, and its Doctrine of Salvation by Jesus Christ alone, proceed not so much from the Strength of their Reason, as from the invincible Power of their violent Prejudices and Disaffection. Not that they are either Wiser, or Better than other Men; not that they have sounder Judgments, a deeper Penetration, or more discerning Spirits; but that their Minds are blinded, and their Understandings darken'd, and their Judgments infatuated by their Lusts. They see indeed what the natural Tendency of such a Religion and such a Dispensation is. It shews them their Danger by their Sins, and makes them sensible that they must either forsake their Vices, or perish by them. And therefore *they hate it*, as King *Ahab* did the Prophet *Micaiah*, because it does not Prophecie 1 Kings xxii. 8. Good concerning them, but Evil. These Men, it seems, would be Wicked here, and yet be Happy hereafter too. And however unwilling they

are to abandon their detestable and abominable Iniquities, Adultery, Fornication, Intemperance, Sensuality, and all Uncleaness; yet they are loth for these their sinful Pleasure's sake to be condemn'd to Everlasting Misery and Torments. This shocks them; 'tis an ungrateful Sentence, and they know not how to bear it: Therefore they become the avow'd Enemies to a Religion, that by denouncing such Threatnings is an avow'd Enemy to their Iniquities: *He that does Evil hateth the Light, neither*
 Joh.iii.20. *cometh to the Light, lest his Deeds should be reprov'd.* But would these Men instead of boasting themselves *safe in a sincere Enquiry*, when at the same time they treat both the Gospel and all its sacred Ordinances with all the vilest Contempt imaginable; would they be indeed Serious and heartily Sincere, and would they approve themselves so by Modesty in their Reasonings, and Reverence in their Discourses, and by what even *Aristotle* himself would in this Case require,
 by

by tasting the Agreeableness of such a Law in settled Practice and habitual Experience, they would discern its Reasonableness, they would approve, they would admire its Excellencies as well as other Men; I mean as all wise and all good Men ever have done thro' the World. *If any Man will do his Will, he shall know his Doctrine whether it be of God.* Joh.vii.17 But this Joh.iii.19 is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men have loved Darkness rather than Light, because their Deeds are evil.

And what now shall we say more to these obstinate and pertinacious wicked Men, who chuse rather to Scorn, and Revile, and Disdain our Religion, than to be reclaim'd by it? Let me only leave this one Remark with them, which I think their own Consciences, notwithstanding all their pretended Sincerity, must confirm to them; I mean this, That if God has exhibited the Christian Religion to Mankind with sufficient Evidences of its Divine Authority

city and Truth; and this he must be suppos'd to have done, and that with an Evidence suitable to every common Understanding, or else *how shall he judge the World* for their Neglect and their Contempt of it? And, I say, if he has, and these Men be found mistaken in their Notions and Reasonings against it at the last great Day, it must render all their Wickedness inexcusable, and their Condemnation without any just Pretences of Complaint. It is in vain for them to plead, or to pretend that they enquir'd and examin'd as well as they could. While they have this Religion set before 'em with the same Evidences of its Divine Authority and Truth, with the same Excellencies and Advantages that have satisfy'd other Men, the Event alone sufficiently shews that they have not, and do not reason about it as other Men do: For if they did, they also would have believ'd. Wherever therefore the Fault may lie, whether in their great Heedlessness and Neglect, in
Pride

Pride of Spirit, and an overweaning Opinion of their own Understanding and Reason, or wick is more common, in an obstinate Prejudice and violent Disaffection in favour to their beloved Lusts and Vices, it's plain even to Demonstration, that where Religion is exhibited in common to all Men, and with the same common Evidence to all alike; and while some believe and adhere to it, others do not, there must be a very great Defect in those Mens Examinations who do not believe: Whatever Evil be the Cause of it, there must be a Fault either in their Enquiry, or in their Judgment past upon it. And then the Matter all comes at last to this, that either Almighty God himself must be thought to Blame, in having promulg'd a Law from Heaven to be observ'd by Mankind under the Penalty of Everlasting Damnation, and yet without Evidence and Proof sufficient to convince Mankind; or else, that Mankind in not having us'd that Evidence with sufficient Care

Care and Faithfulness, he must have monstrous Notions of the Deity, that will not impute the Miscarriage rather unto Men than unto God.

If there be Wisdom, and Goodness, and Justice, and Righteousness with Him, he must be suppos'd to have exhibited Religion with sufficient Evidence. And if he has, where are all their Pretences to Sincerity? No, it must be found at last, that these Mens Unbelief proceeded from Carelessness, or Prejudice and a violent Disaffection. And it will be a most deplorable Thing for 'em to make these Discoveries too late: Too late, I mean, to do 'em Service, and to prevent their Ruin. Not to discern the Truth and Divine Authority of the Christian Religion, till the Sense of it serves only the more infallibly to assure them of their own everlasting Condemnation. And all the Discoveries which they shall then make of its Excellencies, and of the Reasonableness both of its Doctrins and its Duties, shall serve only to con-

convince 'em of the Goodness of God to 'em, and of their own obstinate Wickedness and Folly to abuse it; shall then only serve to let 'em see that once they had Opportunities graciously vouchsafed 'em of securing their Everlasting Salvation by the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, but having foolishly and profanely neglected those, they must now perish in their Infidelity, and be Miserable to all Eternity, without Hope, without Relief, and without Excuse.

F I N I S.

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